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AT HOME IN FIJI

OUR HOME IN FIJI.

Frontispiece.

Mch 8, 1882

AT HOME IN FIJI

BY

C. F. GORDON CUMMING

AUTHOR OF 'A LADY'S CRUISE IN A FRENCH MAN-OF-WAR
'FROM THE HEBRIDES TO THE HIMALAYAS,' ETC.

NEW EDITION, COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME

WITH MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO

DEAR LITTLE NEVIL

AND

GEORGE HAMILTON GORDON

THESE NOTES OF ONE OF THE MANY SUNNY HOMES

OF THEIR HAPPY CHILDHOOD

ARE LOVINGLY DEDICATED

CONTENTS.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION, ... 1

CHAPTER I.

The voyage out, ... 9

CHAPTER II.

Sydney—Camellia trees—Orange gardens, ... 12

CHAPTER III.

Life in the Blue Mountains—Death of Commodore Goodenough—Life in the bush, ... 19

CHAPTER IV.

Arrive in Fiji—Tropical luxury in Levuka—King Thakombau—Plague of measles, ... 26

CHAPTER V.

Levuka—The harbour—Coral-reef—Churches—Animal life—Plants—How to brew yangona—Picnics—Spear-throwing, ... 35

CHAPTER VI.

Fijian spelling—The future capital—A planter's life—Foreign labour—Quaint postage-stamps, ... 53

CHAPTER VII.

A canoe adventure—Sharks—Fever—The feast of worms—Results of mission work—No means of locomotion—God's acre, . . 61

CHAPTER VIII.

Life on Viti Levu—Suva—A floral clock—The Rewa river—Obsolete customs—First night in a native house, ... 70

CHAPTER IX.

Bathing *al fresco*—The Upper Rewa—Barter—Native houses—A funeral—Weddings—Grace, ... 80

CHAPTER X.

Upper Rewa—Sunday among the converts—School examinations—A "missionary meeting"—Savage ornaments—Red tape—*Mékés*—Evening prayer—Marriages, ... 85

CHAPTER XI.

Christmas in Great Fiji—Pig feasts—Weddings—Fijian names—Cannibal dainties—Christmas chimes—Sneezing—"Our Father" in Fijian, ... 96

CHAPTER XII.

Quite alone in a mountain village—Return to Rewa—Basaltic pillars—Rewa pottery—Bau—New Year's eve—King Thakombau as an elder of the Wesleyan Church—Pre-Christian times, ... 107

CHAPTER XIII.

A strange volcanic isle—Joeli Mbulu, a Tongan apostle—The conversion of the people of Ono—Thakombau's canoe—A royal gardener—A small hurricane—Early prayers—Breakfast on Thangalei—Between the breakers—At home at Nasova, ... 121

CHAPTER XIV.

Life at Nasova—Farmyard—Convict thatchers—Native festival at Bau—Return to Nasova—Battles with crabs—Beginning of cannibal disturbance—Fijian fairies—A storm, ... 134

CHAPTER XV.

Government House—Pets—Curios—Crabs—Native police—Death of Mrs de Ricci, ... 147

CHAPTER XVI.

Good Friday in Fiji—Isle Koro—Planters' Houses—Labour—Making native cloth—Great feasts—Weddings—Salaries of Wesleyan missionaries and teachers, ... 156

CHAPTER XVII.

Isle Ngau—Mud-crabs—Albinos—Bathing in the tropics—An earnest congregation—A typical village—Fijian students—The burnt waters—A narrow escape—Wreck of the Fitzroy, . . . 173

CHAPTER XVIII.

Taviuni—Tui Thakow—Missionary perils—Their fruit of peace—Ratu Lala—Rambi Isle—Gipsy life—Vanua Levu—A mission conference—The isle of Kia—A village feast, ... 191

CHAPTER XIX.

The Chief of Mbua—Feudal rights—A night in a miserable village—Church *à la* St Columba—Night on a desert isle—Savu Savu—Boiling springs—Their use—Past and future, . . . 211

CHAPTER XX.

Nasova—The mountain war—A year's progress—Fijian homage, . 219

CHAPTER XXI.

A planter's house—Angora goats—A lovely shore—Sericulture—The mosquito plague, ... 235

CHAPTER XXII.

The pottery districts of Viti Levu—A cannibal's register—A night in a corn-shed—Funeral of Ratu Taivita, ... 243

CHAPTER XXIII.

Start for New Zealand—Extinct volcanoes—Sir George Grey's treasures—Tree-kangaroos, ... 260

CHAPTER XXIV.

Gold-mines—A new city—Native defences—Kauri forest—A hard ride—Kati Kati—Tauranga Gate Pah, and cemetery—Ohinemutu—A volcanic region, ... 272

CHAPTER XXV.

Bewildering new surroundings—The Maori dragon—Breakfast at Wairoa—The mission-house—The hot lake—White terraces—Sulphur and mud volcanoes—An unjust claim resisted—Champions from the Antipodes, ... 290

CHAPTER XXVI.

Fijian rivers—Samoan envoys—Death of a true apostle—A revival—Making a race-course—Mission to New Britain, . . . 307

CHAPTER XXVII.

Various plantations—Crotons—Foreign labour—Green beetles—Loma Loma—A Tongan colony—Hot springs, ... 328

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Notes on Fijian folk-lore—Legend of the rat and cuttle-fish: the crane and the crab: essay of roast-pig: of gigantic birds—Serpents worshipped as incarnate gods—Sacred stones worshipped—Mythology and witchcraft, ... 345

APPENDIX, ... 356

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
Our Home in Fiji, ...	*Frontispiece*
Isles of Ovalau, Moturiki, Bau, and Viwa. From Viti Levu, ...	111
Hot Springs, Isle Ngau, ...	180
A Chief's Kitchen, ...	208
Map, ...	*At the end*

NOTE.—CANNIBAL FORK.

THE Cannibal Fork represented on the binding of this book is a facsimile of a fair average specimen. Some of the chiefs had forks eighteen inches long, of dark polished wood, with handles richly carved.

With reference to the vegetables specially reserved for cannibal feasts, Dr Seemann describes the Boro dina (*Solanum anthropophagorum*) as a bushy shrub, seldom higher than six feet, with a dark glossy foliage, and berries of the shape and colour of tomatoes. This fruit has a faint aromatic smell, and is occasionally prepared like tomato-sauce. The leaves of this plant, and also of two middle-sized trees (the Mala wathi, *Trophis anthropophagorum*, and the Tudano, *Omalanthus pedicellatus*), were wrapped round the *bokola*, and baked with it on heated stones.

AT HOME IN FIJI.

INTRODUCTION.

In the autumn of 1874 it was announced that Fiji had been formally annexed by Great Britain: in other words, that her Majesty's Government had finally decided to accept the offer of cession of the group repeatedly made by the highest chiefs of Fiji. To this course they were impelled chiefly by the conviction of their own utter inability to cope with certain unscrupulous white men, who had here established a footing beyond reach of English law, and who, to promote their own selfish schemes, did not scruple, by every means in their power, to foster the jealousies of the chiefs, and so to keep up the bloody intertribal wars by which the lands were laid waste, and the population decimated.

In the prolonged struggle for power, two great chiefs rose pre-eminent—namely, Maafu, a powerful Tongan chief, who ruled supreme in one portion of the group; and Thakombau, who (at the instigation of the foreigners who had formed themselves into a government of which he was the nominal head) had been formally crowned as Tui Viti—*i.e.*, King of Fiji. The position thus assumed by Thakombau proved, however, untenable. An adverse party of white men opposed every measure which the Government strove to enforce; and at length this nominal king, then upwards of seventy years of age, wearied by these unprofitable contentions, persuaded the other great chiefs to crave the protection of England's Queen. Their petition was at first rejected; but, when repeated as an act of absolute and unconditional cession, it was deemed wise to accept it.

Sir Hercules Robinson, G.C.M.G., Governor of New South

Wales, was deputed by the Home Government to visit the group in person. Accordingly, on 12th September 1874, he sailed from Sydney in H.M.S. Pearl, Commodore Goodenough, and arrived in Levuka (the headquarters of the white population of Fiji) on the 23d inst. Two days later he had a formal interview with Thakombau, in which he explained her Majesty's willingness to accept the responsibility, and to endeavour to exercise her authority in such a manner as should best secure the prosperity and happiness of the people; adding, that such conditions as had been at first attached would render impracticable the proper government of the country. To this Thakombau replied—

"The Queen is right; conditions are not chief-like. I was myself from the first opposed to them, but was overruled. If I give a chief a canoe, and he knows that I expect something from him, I do not say, 'I give you this canoe on condition of your only sailing it on certain days, of your not letting such and such a man on to it, or of your only using a particular kind of rope with it;' but I give him the canoe right out, and trust to his generosity and good faith to make me the return which he knows I expect. If I were to attach conditions, he would say, 'I do not care to be bothered with your canoe; keep it yourself.'

"Why should we have any anxiety about the future? What is the future? Britain.

"Any Fijian chief who refuses to cede cannot have much wisdom. If matters remain as they are, Fiji will become like a piece of drift-wood on the sea, and be picked up by the first passer-by.

"The whites who have come to Fiji are a bad lot. They are mere stalkers on the beach. The wars here have been far more the result of interference of intruders than the fault of the inhabitants.

"Of one thing I am assured, that if we do not cede Fiji, the white stalkers on the beach, the cormorants, will open their maws and swallow us.

"The white residents are going about influencing the minds of Tui Thakau and others, so as to prevent annexation, fearing that in case order is established a period may be put to their lawless proceedings.

"By annexation the two races, white and black, will be bound together, and it will be impossible to sever them. The 'interlacing' has come. Fijians, as a nation, are of an unstable character; and a white man who wishes to get anything out of a Fijian,

if he does not succeed in his object to-day will try again to-morrow, until the Fijian is either wearied out or over-persuaded, and gives in. But law will bind us together, and the stronger nation will lend stability to the weaker."

Sir Hercules Robinson next proceeded in H.M.S. Pearl to visit the great chief Maafu at his capital, Loma-Loma. Tui Thakau, another powerful chief, was present; and both declared their full assent to the cession and to the document already signed by Thakombau, which runs as follows:—

"We, King of Fiji, together with other high chiefs of Fiji, hereby give our country, Fiji, unreservedly to her Britannic Majesty, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. And we trust and repose fully in her that she will rule Fiji justly and affectionately, that we may continue to live in peace and prosperity."

Finally, on the 10th of October 1874, all the great chiefs assembled at Nasova (which was, and still continues to be, the seat of government, and is situated one mile from the town of Levuka), and there signed the deed of cession.

The signatures affixed are as follows:—

CAKOBAU, R.	VAKAWALETABUA.	NACAGILEVU.
Tui Viti and Vunivalu.	*Tui Bua.*	RATU KINI.
MAAFAU.	SAVENAKA.	RITOVA.
TUI CAKAU.	ISIKELI.	KATUNIVERE.
RATU EPELI.	ROKO TUI DREKETI.	MATANITOBUA.

HERCULES ROBINSON.

Thus did Fiji pass from the dominion of misrule to the orderly position of a British colony,—a change touchingly alluded to by the old king (or, as he is called by his own people, the Vuni Valu, or Root of War), who on this occasion desired his Prime Minister, Mr Thurston, to present his war-club to Queen Victoria. Mr Thurston interpreted the king's words as follows:—

"Your Excellency,—Before finally ceding his country to her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, the king desires, through your Excellency, to give her Majesty the only thing he possesses that may interest her.

"The king gives her Majesty his old and favourite war-club, the former, and, until lately the only known, law of Fiji.

"In abandoning club law, and adopting the forms and principles of civilised societies, he laid by his old weapon and covered it with the emblems of peace. Many of his people, whole tribes, died and passed away under the old law; but hundreds of thousands still survive to learn and enjoy the newer and better state of things.

The king adds only a few words. With this emblem of the past he sends his love to her Majesty, saying that he fully confides in her and in her children, who, succeeding her, shall become kings of Fiji, to exercise a watchful control over the welfare of his children and people; and who, having survived the barbaric law and age, are now submitting themselves, under her Majesty's rule, to civilisation."

The king then handed the club to his Excellency, who informed Thakombau that he would not fail to transmit to the Queen the historic gift which he desired to present to her, and that he would at the same time communicate to her Majesty, *verbatim*, the trustful and gratifying message by which the gift was accompanied.

This magnificent club, together with Thakombau's huge *yangona* bowl, is now in the safe keeping of Mr Franks (of the British Museum), and is kept with the Christie Collection in Victoria Street. Both club and bowl are at least twice the size of any others we have seen in the isles.

Five days later Sir Hercules held a farewell meeting with the chiefs, many of whom had hitherto met only as open foes. In closing his farewell speech, he said—

"I hope that all differences and animosities will now be forgotten and subdued. The Vuni Valu's (Root of War) war-club has been sent with a dutiful and loving message to our Queen. I hope all other weapons of strife have in like manner been buried at the foot of the staff upon which we have raised the Union Jack."

To this the two chiefs, hitherto rivals for the supreme power, thus replied. First spoke Thakombau.

"I hope that all present will now understand that they are her Majesty's subjects and servants, and that, as the Governor has said, their future is in their own hands. They will be judged according to their behaviour and their deserts, and according to such judgment they will stand or fall.

"We know that we are not here now simply as an independent body of Fijian chiefs, but as subordinate agents of the British Crown; and being bound together by strength and power, that strength and power will be able to overcome anything which tends to interfere with or interrupt the present unity.

"Any chief attempting to pursue a course of disloyalty must expect to be dealt with on his own merits, and not to escape by any subterfuge, or by relying upon any Fijian customs, or upon his high family connections."

Maafu then said—

"What more can any of us say? The unity of to-day has been our desire for years. I have now been twenty years in Fiji, and I have never before seen such a sight as I see to-day—Fiji actually and truly united. We tried a government ourselves; we did not succeed. That has passed away. Another and a better and more permanent state of things has been brought into existence. I believe that I speak the mind of all present when I say that we are really and truly united in heart and will, and we are all gratified with what we have heard. We are true men, and will return to our homes knowing that the unity of Fiji is a fact, and that peace and prosperity will follow."

On the eve of Sir Hercules's departure, a deputation of the Wesleyan Mission waited upon him to express their intense satisfaction with the deed of cession; but for which, they considered that their work as Christian missionaries would have received serious injury. They added: "We venture to remind your Excellency that it is not forty years since missionaries representing the British Wesleyan Churches came to Fiji, then in a state of savage heathenism; and that, but for the blessing of God upon their labours, there would have been no British Fiji at the present day."

Sir Hercules's reply must have been truly gratifying to his hearers. Its conclusion was—

"I fervently trust that a new era has now dawned upon Fiji, and that under British rule the moral as well as the material progress of the new colony may, by the blessing of Providence, be effectually secured. The great social advances which have already been made within the last forty years from savage heathenism, are due to the self-denying and unostentatious labours of the Wesleyan Church; and I can therefore heartily wish to your missionary enterprise in this country continued vitality and success.

"With renewed thanks for the good wishes which you are pleased to express for myself personally, I have, &c.,

"HERCULES ROBINSON.

"To the Rev. JOSEPH WATERHOUSE,
,, SAMUEL BROOKES,
,, D. S. WYLIE."

With reference to the provision to be made for the chiefs who had thus voluntarily resigned their rights, without knowing to what extent these might be really taken from them, Sir Hercules suggested that Thakombau should receive a pension of £1500

a-year, and a present of £1000 to buy a much-coveted little vessel for his own use; that in the event of his death, his queen, Andi Lydia, should continue to receive £1000 a-year for her life. Their three sons would probably find employment under Government, with suitable salaries; as would also be the case with the principal chiefs, all of whom would continue to hold their office of Rokos of the twelve Provinces—a native dignity held in much reverence.

In January 1875 the Hon. Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, K.C.M.G. (son of George, fourth Earl of Aberdeen), was appointed first Governor of Fiji,—an archipelago containing seventy or eighty inhabited islands, some of which are of considerable size, the largest, Viti Levu, or Great Fiji, being about ninety miles long by fifty broad, nearly the same area as the counties of Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Middlesex, Berkshire, and Hampshire. The next in size, Vanua Levu, the Great Land, is upwards of one hundred miles long by twenty-five wide, somewhat smaller than Cornwall, Devonshire, and Somerset. Taviuni and Khandavu are each twenty-five miles long; while Bau, the native capital, is scarcely a mile in length. Besides these, there are upwards of one hundred and fifty uninhabited islets; and each of the principal islands forms a centre round which cluster from twenty to thirty minor isles, forming groups as distinct and as widely separated as are the Orkneys, the Hebrides, and the Scilly Isles, and their people are equally unknown to one another. The climate is, for the tropics, unusually healthy. At the time of the cession, they were inhabited by about 1500 whites and 150,000 natives.[1] It was June 1875 ere Sir Arthur reached the colony, and, to quote his own words[2]—

"The state of things which disclosed itself to me on my arrival was not encouraging. A terrible pestilence, heedlessly admitted, had swept away one-third of the entire native population. Though its violence had diminished, its ravages had not wholly ceased. Even where it had passed by, it had left behind it terror and despair. The same cause had carried off many of the imported labourers of the planters, who, from a variety of causes, were themselves, for the most part, reduced to the greatest straits. The revenue had fallen short of even the modest estimate of Sir H. Robinson, whilst the expenditure had largely exceeded his anticipations. The introduction of labour from other parts of the Pacific had almost ceased. The season had been unfavourable for agriculture, wet, and unhealthy, and gloom and discontent pervaded all classes.

"The white settlers had apparently imagined that, by some magical process, the assumption of sovereignty by Great Britain was to be followed by an immediate change from poverty to wealth, from struggling indigence to pros-

[1] The present population of Fiji, in 1880, is estimated at 110,000 natives, 1902 Europeans, and 3200 Polynesians.

[2] From a Paper read before the Royal Colonial Institute, 18th March 1879.

perity; that their claims to land would be at once allowed; that an abundant supply of labour would be at once found for them; and that their claims to supremacy over the natives, which the Government of Cakobau—whatever its faults—had steadily refused to recognise, would be at once acknowledged. They were, therefore, bitterly disappointed to find their hopes not realised.

"The natives were cowed and disheartened by the pestilence, which they believed to have been introduced purposely to destroy them,—a belief encouraged, I am ashamed to say, by some of our own countrymen, and which was probably the main cause of the disturbances in the Highlands of Viti Levu in the following year. They were perplexed by reiterated assurances, from the whites living among them, that by the mere fact of annexation to Great Britain their own laws and customs had been abolished; that their rules of succession, and for the transmission of property, had no longer any existence; that many of their cherished habits were illegal; that their lands had become the property of the Crown; and that they would themselves be expected, if not required, to labour on white men's plantations. They were told, moreover, that all distinctions of rank among them were at an end,—a notification more perplexing than pleasing, in its suddenness, to the people generally, and which naturally caused irritation and distrust among the higher chiefs.

"A third element in the population, the immigrant labourers from other parts of Polynesia, whose contracts of service had long expired, but whose employers had no means to send them back to their homes, and who had remained, in some cases, for many years in by no means voluntary servitude, were exasperated by the bad faith they had experienced.

"At the end of the year 1875 I found myself with a revenue of £16,000, from which I had to meet an expenditure of over £70,000, and at the head of a dissatisfied and impoverished white population of some 1500 persons, in the midst of a native population nearly one hundred times as large, suspicious, watchful, and uneasy; while on but too many estates, bands of wrongfully detained immigrants formed a real, though apparently unrecognised, source of danger.

"It is not my object, in the present paper, to narrate the steps taken in the administration of the government since that time. Suffice it to say, generally, that the revenue of the colony has swelled rapidly from £16,000 in 1875 to £38,000 in 1876; £47,000 in 1877, and over £61,000 in 1878,[1] while the expenditure has been reduced to a level with the income; that the receipts from customs, which were, in 1875, but £8000, amounted in 1878, under practically the same tariff, to £20,000; that the imports have nearly doubled in value, and the exports (which exceed the imports) have quite done so; that the Polynesian labourers, whose term of service had expired, have been conveyed home and replaced by labour newly recruited; that more than 800 land titles have been settled after laborious and minute investigation; that measures have been passed by the Legislative Council which do honour to those who framed them, and compare favourably with those of many older colonies; that the Government service has been organised, Courts of Law established; that a dangerous disturbance has been put down quickly, cheaply, and effectually; that capital is being invested; and that, after a careful investigation, extending over more than a year, it has been reported to me, by most competent and most cautious scientific authority, that the annual value of the agricultural exports of the colony, when its powers of production have been fully developed, will probably exceed £10,000,000 sterling."

After alluding to the purely native organisation of Bulis, Rokos, and other functionaries whom Sir Arthur found it desirable to con-

[1] The revenue for 1879 was estimated at £75,150.

tinue to employ in the same capacities, in the administration of local government, and in carrying out various measures, he goes on to speak of the system on which these were framed.

"It was always borne in mind that these regulations had, to a great extent, to be administered by the natives themselves, and that a code which they thoroughly understood and had taken part in preparing, and which was in harmony with their own ideas and modes of thought, would be far more easily worked, and far more willingly and intelligently obeyed, than much better regulations imposed by external force, but which they might neither comprehend nor appreciate, and which would therefore be of far less real utility. . . .

"I may say that I have no reason to be dissatisfied with the results. I have no doubt that the native magistrates make mistakes, and sometimes grave mistakes; I have no doubt that in individual instances the Roko Tuis are harsh and overbearing; but it is, I think, far better that they should now and then be so than that all share in the administration should be taken away from them. The employment of natives in the administration of the government was, indeed, a financial necessity, for the means did not exist, and do not yet exist, for the payment of such a staff of white officials as would have been required had the services of natives been dispensed with. But had no such imperative cause existed to render their employment inevitable, I should equally have deemed it to be required by considerations of policy. Unless removed from their habitual places of residence, and treated with a harshness wholly incompatible with the understanding on which the islands had been ceded to England, chiefs of intelligence, high rank, and great social influence, would have become, if stripped of all authority, and deprived of all employment except that of brooding over their own changed condition, very dangerous elements in the colony. For, be it remembered, the legal non-recognition of their position would not have in any way deprived them of the power they possessed over those who yielded to them an instinctive and unquestioning obedience. As it is, they are cheerful and willing assistants to the Government in the performance of its duties.

"The results of the system actually adopted were apparent when the mountaineers of Viti Levu attacked the Christian villages of the Singatoka. I appealed to the Rokos for help, and named thirty men as the contingent each was to send. Had the same state of mind existed that I found on my arrival, sullen and reluctant submission would at best have been given to the order, and more probably excuses would have been made for the non-appearance of the force; the mischief would have spread, and a long and costly war would have resulted. What was in fact the answer to the appeal? From almost every province came double the number of men asked for—picked men out of a host of volunteers — and the troubles were suppressed by native forces alone, without delay and at a trifling cost. . . .

"I will only say one word on the future prospects of the colony—namely, that I believe Fiji to be an admirable field for the investment of large capital, whether in sugar or coffee estates. Sugar grows spontaneously, is of the first quality, and has a practically boundless market in Australia. As regards coffee culture, Fiji is now in much the same position as Ceylon thirty or forty years ago, and I have no doubt that those who now found estates there will find them in no long time amply remunerative. I have never seen finer tobacco than that raised in Fiji, and the cotton produced there is admitted to be of the best description."

Fiji lies 1760 miles N.-E. of Sydney, and 1175 miles N. of

Auckland. The value of its principal exports may be gathered from the following table:—

	Coppra.	Cotton.	Sugar.
1875, . .	£40,003	£28,706	£3,417
1876, . .	45,908	21,122	10,433
1877, . .	79,403	15,690	16,170
1878, . .	122,194	20,700	18,640

At the close of 1878 the area under cultivation was as follows:—

Coppra—*i.e.*, cocoa-nut, ...	9166 acres.
Cotton, ...	2390 ,,
Sugar, ...	1772 ,,
Maize, ...	1000 ,,
Coffee, ...	1219 ,,

The cultivation of coffee is as yet in its infancy.

Tobacco, arrow-root, cocoa, cinchona, tea, vanilla, rice, pepper, &c., have been produced as yet only in small quantities, experimentally. The export of green fruit for Australia and New Zealand is a rapidly increasing item. Thus in 1877, 3100 bunches of bananas were exported; in 1878, 21,316 bunches; in 1879, 43,062 bunches.

The form of Government is that of a Crown Colony, with Executive and Legislative Councils.

CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE OUT.

On Board the Messageries Maritimes s.s Anadyr,
Nearing Point de Galle, *April* 17, 1875.

My dear Fellow-Arab,—You see I am "once more upon the waters," but whither I am now bound is a problem which I defy you to guess. I had not time to write to you before my hurried departure from England, but you see my locomotive demon has allowed me a very short spell of rest (if rest it can be called, to rush all over England and Scotland, visiting innumerable friends and relations! Practically, I find such visiting involves more

wear and tear of mind and body, than any amount of travelling in distant lands).

Well, as you know, it is not yet six months since I returned home, after eighteen months of the most delightful wanderings in every corner of beautiful Ceylon. It needed all the warmth of family affection to make the bitter cold of an English winter even endurable, and my yearning for tropical heat and sunlight was for ever being reawakened by aggravating acquaintances, who invariably asked me, "Where are you going next?" As I had not the smallest prospect of ever again escaping from my native shores, I always answered, "To Fiji," as being the most absurd answer that suggested itself to so foolish a question,—a place known to me only as being somehow associated with a schoolboy song about the King of the Cannibal Islands. Judge, then, of my amazement, when, one morning, I received a letter to tell me that Fiji had been annexed, and that Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon had been appointed first Governor, and gravely suggesting that I should accompany Lady Gordon to her remote home. I need scarcely tell you that the temptation proved irresistible.

To begin with, a cruise in the South Pacific has been one of the dreams of my life; and the idea of going actually to live for an indefinite period on isles where there are still a number of ferocious cannibals, has a savour of romance which you can imagine does not lack charm. And then to do it all so comfortably, gliding into the adventure so easily, without the slightest exertion on my own part, is far too rare a chance to be lost, in spite of the remonstrances of my sisters, who consider it quite unnatural of me to care to leave home again so soon.

Naturally, when I announced my intention of really going, every one replied, "Of course you are only joking!" And indeed, even now, I myself find it difficult to think of Fiji or anything connected with it in any other light than that of a great joke; its very name has always been considered funny!

Its whereabouts, and everything connected with it, are evidently matters of the vaguest uncertainty to all my friends. I did my best to appear astonished at their ignorance, but, between ourselves, I honestly confess to having possessed the very haziest ideas on the subject, up to the moment when that letter reached me, when, of course, I got an atlas and hunted Fiji up. As you probably have no map at hand, and are certain to be equally in the dark, I may as well tell you that it is a group of about 250 islands, of which about 70 are inhabited. That it is in the South

Pacific, about ten degrees south of the Equator, thirty degrees east of the north coast of Australia, and twenty degrees north of New Zealand. This is a very rough description, but it is sufficient to make you realise the position.

As yet, I only know of two people who have been there—one of whom, Harry Leefe, started from Cresswell last year to join an uncle who owns an island there, and grows cotton and cocoa-nuts. This Robinson Crusoe of the South Seas has for years past been to us enveloped in a halo of romance; and now I am looking forward to seeing him in his own home, and myself becoming "a resident in the South Seas." Does it not sound delightful, and don't you envy me? Before leaving London, I managed to get up some information by reading a cleverly compiled book on Fiji, by a man who has never been there; but he vouches for the group being a terrestrial paradise, where the soil need only be scratched to yield abundant harvests of every sort, and where every form of volcanic crag combines with tropical foliage to produce endless beauties. So I have invested in a goodly stock of drawing paper, and enough paints and brushes to last me a lifetime, and look forward to a most interesting sketching tour. The ground will have the advantage of being altogether new, which is an immense charm.

And now we are fairly started, and a very large pleasant party we are. We (the Fijian family) assembled in London on the 22d March, for a short special service at King's College Chapel, Somerset House, and next morning started for Paris, where we halted four days, embarking at Marseilles on Easter morning—an unsatisfactory moment for starting, but travellers cannot always choose their own times and seasons. This is a splendid steamer, 3600 tons, most comfortable in every respect, and with a capital table for such as appreciate French cookery.

Our party consists of Sir Arthur and Lady Gordon, and two particularly nice little ones—namely, Nevil, a picturesque girl of six, with silky brown curls, and dark thoughtful eyes; and George, aged four, who is always called Jack, because from his boyhood he has worn real sailor's clothes, made by a man-of-war's tailor. Then comes their cousin, Arthur Gordon, who has a fine talent for drawing, and is Sir Arthur's secretary. Captain Knollys, A.D.C., only joined us at Aden, bringing with him a very important member of the family—namely, Snip, a tiny black and tan terrier. Dr Mayo, Mr Mitchell, Mr Eyre, and Mr Le Hunte, at present complete our party, the latter being a young lawyer, and, moreover,

our typical Briton,—a stalwart combination of Ireland and Yorkshire. Mr Mitchell was a tried friend in the West Indies. And Dr Mayo is a keen, clever man, a fellow of New College, Oxford, who has followed his profession in every camp in Europe, and in some in Asia, and now hopes to find an ample field for studying new forms of the ills that flesh is heir to among the various races of the Pacific. He is a good botanist and antiquarian, and is a mine of information on all topics. All these spend several hours a day learning Fijian, with the most exemplary patience and determination, by the help of vocabularies and dictionaries. Last but not least come the excellent Welsh nurse and faithful Portuguese under-nurse; and Mr and Mrs Abbey, major-domo and general heads of all departments, who have already lived with the Gordons in Trinidad and Mauritius, and there proved themselves pillars of Government House: a most comfortable and reliable couple, warranted to take good care of everything and everybody. They have two little boys—the youngest, Arky, a sunny-headed little mite.

Captain and Mrs Havelock, and Dr and Mrs Macgregor, are to join us at Sydney, as are also the Judge and Attorney-General, Sir William and Lady Hackett, and Mr and Mrs de Ricci, so that the white population of Fiji will receive a large accession.

I will add no more at present, except to say that, with my usual luck at this point, it was bitterly cold and very grey coming through the Suez Canal and down the Red Sea. There had been a heavy storm, which turned the sea to mud for some miles ere we reached Port Said, which was dirty and dull as usual,—heavy waves dashing over the breakwater, and Lake Menzaleh looking grey and dreary. . . .—Ever yours.

CHAPTER II.

SYDNEY—CAMELLIA TREES—ORANGE GARDENS.

SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES,
June 2.

DEAR NELL,—My last letter home was posted at Rockhampton, two days before we reached Brisbane. The latter lies twenty miles up a river, so a little steamer comes down to meet the big

one and carry letters and passengers to and fro. On this occasion there was a special one for Sir Arthur, and he and his party were hospitably entertained by the Governor, Mr Cairns. His private secretary at present is Mr Maudslay, a son of the celebrated engineer. He has already travelled far and near for his own amusement, and we think it probable that some day he will find his way to Fiji and become one of our band of brothers, or Knights of the Round Table, if you think that sounds better. I should scarcely think Brisbane was a congenial atmosphere. It seemed to us a singularly uninteresting place, its botanical gardens being almost the only resource. Of course, in a semi-tropical climate like that of Queensland, there is always the attraction of very varied foliage; but we thought even this was somewhat stunted.

We had lovely weather on our two days' voyage from Brisbane, and also the day we arrived here. Unfortunately we just missed seeing the festivities for the Queen's birthday, when every ship in the beautiful harbour was dressed, and there was an immense volunteer review. There are no military here, and the volunteers only meet on this one day. Lady Robinson is, however, to have a great ball to-night, when she promises to show us any number of Australian beauties.

The accommodation of Government House is so very limited, and the family party so large, that it was as much as she could do to find room for Lady Gordon and the children. All the gentlemen have found quarters at an hotel; and Commodore and Mrs Goodenough, a most hospitable and kind couple, have managed to take me in. Never was there a better illustration of the old proverb that "where there is heart-room there is hearth-room," for their house is tiny and yet shelters many friends. Lady Robinson kindly says that, though not living under her roof, I am nevertheless her guest. So I dine there most nights.

How you would revel in the exquisite loveliness of the camellias! The dinner-table is most often decorated with delicate pink camellias and maidenhair fern; and the loveliest white ones are abundant as snowdrops in an English spring. Beautiful as these are, I am not enamoured of what we have hitherto seen of Australia as contrasted with Ceylon and India. To begin with, I have contrived to catch a severe cold, not improved by all these starlight walks to and from Government House, which is just too near to be worth driving to; and the climate is apparently as changeable as in England. We have had four consecutive days of incessant rain and cold, raw air, so on every side you hear people coughing

and sneezing; and we are glad to cower over fires—for which, by the way, the coal comes from Newcastle.

It is so absurd to hear the old familiar names out here. A man tells you he has just come from Morpeth, Oxford, or Hyde Park, Norwood or Sydenham, Waterloo, Waverley or Paddington, Birkenhead or Liverpool, Brighton or Cremorne, Clifton, St Leonard's, Darlington, Anglesea, &c. It is quite a relief to hear so wholly novel a name as Wooloomoolloo!

But truly all the attractions which have hitherto delighted me in foreign lands are here conspicuous by their absence. Apparently no native population. Certainly no rich colour; no statuesque tropical undress; no graceful cocoa-palms. Everything is British, even to the ploughman riding his horses home at night, and the four-horse omnibuses, and the hansom cab which drives you about the town at 4s. an hour, and the genuine unadulterated cockney accents of men born and bred in the colony. Of course it is interesting to see this Greater Britain mushroom, but it is difficult to believe that we are 14,000 miles from London! and I hope, before long, to get glimpses of bush-life.

But of Sydney itself we run some danger of getting more than we wish, inasmuch as the difficulties of getting ready a house in Fiji are very great, especially from lack of hands to labour—a difficulty which has been sorely increased by a frightful plague of measles, which, by news just received, have (at the lowest computation) carried off one-fifth of the whole population of the Isles. Some rate it far higher. And the survivors are all disheartened and miserable, and unfit for work. So, although Sir Arthur is buying his doors and windows and planking ready-made here to facilitate his building, it may be months before he has a house ready for us; and meanwhile we must have one here, and a very difficult article it is to find. The gentlemen are house-hunting all over the place, with very bad success; and the worst of it is that there is so little time, as Sir Arthur must start for Fiji within ten days, and leave us settled here,—a dull prospect for Lady Gordon, and doubly so as she must be anxious at his running into such a sink of measles, he being the only one of the party who has never had them.

We went to the opera last night. The most remarkable thing about it was the drop-scene, which was simply a huge advertisement sheet, with puffs of all sorts, from the newest sewing-machine to the most efficacious pills! Imagine the effect of this descending between each act of Anna Bolena! I regretted much that I had

not rather accompanied Commodore and Mrs Goodenough, who spent the evening with a large party of blue-jackets. It is quite touching to see their cordial kindness to all the men, and extreme interest in all that concerns them; and yet the Commodore has the name of being stern. I can only say I never saw a face which more thoroughly revealed the genial nature within.

June 10.

We have had several pleasant expeditions in the neighbourhood. Last Monday, Sir Hercules having ordered a special train to take us to see the Blue Mountains, we started early and went as far as the wonderful zigzags by which the rail is carried across the mountains. I had the privilege of sitting on the engine, so I obtained an admirable view.

The following day Mr Gordon, Capt. Knollys, Dr Macgregor, Dr Mayo, and Mr Eyre started for Fiji in H.M.S. Barracouta, so our first detachment is fairly under weigh. Sir Arthur is waiting for telegrams from England, and is to follow in H.M.S. Pearl with Commodore Goodenough. It has been decided that we are to remain at Pfahlert's Hotel till he sends us orders to follow, which we hope may come soon.

Meanwhile we find some attractions here. To-day we drove out to the South Heads, and had a most lovely walk along the cliffs. At the entrance to the harbour we came to a pretty little church perched among the rocks, and listened to the choir practising "The strain upraise," while we sat basking in the sunshine, the whole air fragrant with the honeyed blossoms of the red and white epacris, which grows in profusion, and is suggestive of many-coloured heaths. Though the everlasting gum-tree is apparently the only indigenous growth, there is lovely foliage of all sorts in the gardens of innumerable villas, which lie dotted all over the countless headlands, and along the shores of the many creeks which branch off from this immense and most lovely harbour.

In these gardens you find clumps of bamboo growing beside weeping-willows; holly-bushes, with clusters of scarlet berries, overshadowed by stiff date palms; broad-leaved plantains, contrasting with leafless trees; frost-dreading heliotrope beside wintry chrysanthemums and withered oak; while dark Norfolk Island pines serve as a background to large camellia-trees, literally one blaze of blossom, pink, white, crimson, and variegated. These grow in such rank profusion wherever they receive the slightest care, that we marvel to find them in so comparatively few gardens,

especially as their value is so fully recognised that good blossoms fetch about 6d. a-piece; and market-gardeners allow millions to drop unheeded, rather than lower their price.

There are lovely ferns in many of the little gullies, and delightful spots at which to land for picnics. One of the favourite "ploys" here is to start armed with a small hammer, a bottle of vinegar or some lemons, and slices of bread and butter, and find a feast of oysters on the rocks! Two days ago, the weather being warm and sunny, Lady Robinson took us in her steam-launch fourteen miles up one of the creeks. It was like a beautiful Scotch lake; and we caught glimpses of many lesser creeks branching off to right and left, all tempting us to explore. Now I must despatch my letter. So good-bye.—Your loving sister.

PFAHLERT'S HOTEL, SYDNEY,
Sunday, June 20, 1875.

I told you in my last that the first detachment of our party started for Fiji in the Barracouta. Now so many have followed that we feel quite forsaken. This day last week Sir Arthur and Lady Gordon went to a farewell lunch on board H.M.S. Pearl with Commodore and Mrs Goodenough, and on Monday the Barracouta sailed. We sat in the beautiful botanic gardens to watch her pass down the harbour, carrying away so many of our friends—Sir Arthur, Mr Mitchell, and Mr Le Hunte of our own set, and the good kind Commodore and his officers. I do so envy them going off to the Isles, and of course it is a sore trial to Lady Gordon to be left here: it will be fully three months before we are allowed to follow. On Wednesday another detachment followed—namely, Mr and Mrs de Ricci, Mrs Macgregor and her little girl, Mrs Abbey and her two little boys. They went by the Meteor, a very small sailing ship, and I fear they are likely to have a very uncomfortable passage, lasting fully a fortnight.

The people here are not encouraging as to our prospects. Many of them have lost a great deal of money which they had invested in Fijian plantations; and those who have had friends or relations there, in some cases ladies and children, give us most lamentable accounts of the hardships they had to undergo from want of the commonest necessaries of life, and dangerous voyages in open canoes. From all we hear, I think there can be no doubt a planter's life in the Isles must be a most unenviable lot; but of course, as far as we individually are concerned, the way will be made smooth.

I am preparing for emergencies by attending the infirmary several days a week, to pick up a few ideas about simple nursing. It is under the care of Miss Osborne, a cousin of Florence Nightingale. Evidently her whole heart is in her work, and everything is done thoroughly; and kindness and order reign supreme. I have been very much interested in some of the patients, especially in one poor sailor who hails from "the parish of Dyke."[1]

Nothing strikes me more here than the exceeding loyalty of the inhabitants. Every one speaks of England as "home," though neither they nor their parents or grandparents ever saw the old country; and certainly our Queen has no more devoted subjects. To-day being her Majesty's Accession, the churches were crowded; and at the cathedral this afternoon we had the "Coronation Anthem," and then "God save the Queen."

I find here that it does not do to use the word *native*, as we are wont to do, with reference to the brown races. Here it is applied exclusively to white men born in the country, the hideous blacks being invariably described as *aborigines*. Hideous indeed they are, far beyond any race I have yet met with; and of so low a type that it is impossible, in their case, to regret that strange law of nature which seems to ordain the dying out of dark skinned races before the advance of civilisation, and which is nowhere so self-evident as in Australia, where they have simply faded away, notwithstanding the strict observance of their own most elaborate marriage laws, which set forth the various degrees of relationship between different tribes, and the rotations in which alone they are permitted to marry. Perhaps, however, if all tales be true concerning the ruthless policy of extermination practised by too many of the settlers on the frontier, and the manner in which tribes have been shot down wholesale for daring to trespass on the lands taken from them without any sort of right, the extinction of the Australian black may be found to be less a law of nature than an illustration of the might that makes right. But certainly the few specimens we have come across have been unspeakably wretched, living in gipsy camps far more miserable than those of any British tinker, altogether dirty and debased.

The Commodore rejoices us by saying that our Fijians are a very superior race, many of them really handsome, fine, stalwart men. He brought some Fijian yams on his return from the Isles, and had a dinner party, that we might all taste them. Anything Fijian is really as great a curiosity here as it would be in London. You

[1] In Morayshire.

know the Pearl took Sir Hercules to Fiji to make final arrangements about annexation; and when that business was settled, King Thakombau and his sons came to visit Sir Hercules and see something of civilisation. You can imagine how strange the great city must have seemed to men whose notion of a king's palace is a one-roomed thatched house one storey high. The horses and carriages were still more wonderful; and as to the railway, that was beyond comprehension. But the old king took it all very philosophically, and was never so happy as when Lady Robinson's little granddaughter, a pretty little child with golden hair, crept on to his knee, whispering, "You won't eat *me*, will you?" Or else he would lie down and rest on his own mat, keeping his big Bible beside him,—not that the old man could read it, for I believe his studies commenced rather too late in life, but he said "it made him feel so good!"

PFAHLERT'S HOTEL, *July* 15.

DEAR EISA,—I have been all the morning waiting for the mail, sure of a letter from you, but I again have drawn a blank in that tantalising lottery. You can scarcely realise what a matter of interest the mails become in a place like this—the perpetual coming and going of the steamers, the signalling of their approach from the Heads, then watching them come up the harbour, right past Government House to their respective creeks. Such a lovely harbour as it is, and every headland dotted with picturesque villas! We have had both time and weather to enjoy it, the latter having been faultless ever since the rainy week which greeted our arrival, when it did pour with a vengeance. Now it is quite lovely, only the nights are too chilly sometimes for perfection. It is mid-winter, you know, and all the deciduous trees are leafless. Leafless oak and apple trees beside camellia and orange trees in full flower and fruit! But the willows have not lost *their* leaves, but grow beside great clumps of bamboo.

The days slip away pleasantly. Many very kind friends plan delightful excursions for us, by land or water; and I learn what carriage-springs are capable of enduring when I see the daintiest little pony-phaetons driven, apparently at random, through the bush, across fields, or over the roughest cart-tracks. When we come to a paling, we deliberately take it down, and, of course, put it up again. Sometimes we come to dells where the loveliest maidenhair fern grows wild, and we fill the carriage with it and the pink epacris. As to the sweet wild geranium which abounds,

it is thought quite extraordinary that we should care to gather it! Yesterday we went by rail to Paramatta, and drove to the great orange gardens, and noticed one group of trees from 40 to 45 feet high, the stems being nearly a foot in diameter, and the lowest branch three feet above my head. I do not remember any so large in Malta or elsewhere. It seemed strange to see these gardens with such wealth of fruit and blossom, while the neighbouring peach and pear orchards were all leafless. We drove on to the camellia gardens, and paid five shillings for quite a small basketful, though millions of blossoms were wasting their loveliness, and I would fain have carried off even those that lay unheeded on the grass. To-night there is a great ball at the Masonic Hall, to which we go, being bound to see everything.

CHAPTER III.

LIFE IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS—DEATH OF COMMODORE GOODENOUGH—LIFE IN THE BUSH.

FROM A TINY COTTAGE AT THE WEATHERBOARD IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS, NEW SOUTH WALES, Begun *Aug.* 19, 1875.

You see I have contrived to escape from the region of fine clothes and prolonged meals! Oh dear, what a trial it is to be invited to luncheon at some lovely place, where you go expecting a pleasant day out of doors, and find an immense party assembled for a stiff dinner of many courses, which takes nearly the whole afternoon! The donors of the feast console themselves by a quiet evening stroll and late tea; but the poor guest has to return to undergo a second long dinner as usual. Nevertheless I have had many delightful days in the neighbourhood of Sydney.

You have no notion what a size the harbour is, and how immense is the amount of shipping always coming and going! Great ships, and steamboats, and yachts, and tiny steam-launches, —sometimes I have counted eighteen or twenty steamers in sight at once. And then the out-of-the-way creeks are numberless. I think we have explored at least a score, sketching and picnicing, and I flatter myself I know the beauties of the harbour as well as the oldest Sydneyite. I learnt a good deal about it during a

most enjoyable fortnight I spent with the Wentworths, whose lovely home, Greycliff, is close to the water, near the Heads, which are grand crags guarding the entrance, about six miles from the town. The Wentworths and Coopers own all the prettiest places thereabouts. We were out almost every day from morning till night, the boatmen making a fire and cooking our dinner in regular bush fashion,—fish just caught, potatoes and chops, &c.; and always bush tea, boiled with milk in a kettle,—and very good it is under the circumstances, though I do not advise you to adopt the fashion. Steaming a snapper is the summit of culinary art—a snapper being a large fish, which is cooked (cut up) with potatoes and scraps of bacon and onion. I confess I prefer the various small fish fried. One of the boatmen is Joe, a most jocular old black from Cape de Verd; the other, Jamie Lee, a true gipsy. Of course kindred spirits fraternised at once, and when he found I could pull a pretty strong oar, the conquest was complete! So we had days of gipsying and evenings of melody, Mrs Wentworth's sister being one of the most perfect musicians I ever met. I have also spent some pleasant days with the Morts, whose lovely house, Greenoakes, is built as a dream of Alton Towers,—all gables outside, and good old carved oak inside. And such a garden of camellias, pink, red, and white —great trees of them! Amongst other things, Mr Mort owns one of the principal docks here, and an iron foundry; also a great dairy-farm on the coast, with 500 cows, all in milk! But his all-engrossing interest is a great freezing establishment for conveying meat to England. He has it killed in the mountains, brought to Sydney in iced trucks, and there received into genuine arctic regions, into which you descend shivering, and see innumerable carcases, all frozen as hard as stone. These are to be conveyed, frozen, to England, about 200 tons at a time. It is a gigantic experiment, on which Mr Mort has already sunk nearly £100,000. Everything about it is on new principles, and it is now *all but* in working order. It has been the labour of years, and is now just about to see daylight.

You perceive my writing is shaky. I am in the train, returning to Sydney, whirling past orange orchards, and endless dull bush, all of gum-trees. But everywhere there is an undergrowth of lovely bush flowers; and here and there, from the crevices of the rock, there hangs a veil of creamy blossom,—I think they are rock-lilies; and there are some scarlet lilies, like crowns of fire; and strange blossoms of the *waratau*, which I cannot describe,

because it is so utterly unlike anything you ever saw,—something between a scarlet dahlia and an artichoke. But the glory of the bush is the feathery mimosa, which takes the place of our broom, and is covered with sheets of fragrant gold. There is also a lovely creeper (here they would say *vine*), with masses of lilac blossom—the Kennedia—which climbs the mimosas, and droops in richest trails of bright purply red. You can best realise the effect by picturing a bough of lilac wistaria overhanging a golden laburnum. Even the dull gum-trees, the eucalypti, become beautiful when covered with delicate yellowish blossoms. The sheep-farmers glory in the dreary tracts of land, the monotony of which is not varied by one gay flower. Happily the bush revels in colour, and I find upwards of fifteen totally different sorts of epacris—crimson, white, pink, and yellow. I call them heaths, but I am rebuked for so doing. Some are so fragrant that they scent the air like honey. But when I revel in wild flowers every one says, Oh, wait till you see the bush a month hence! It will be one carpet of many colours.

I must account for being so much away from Lady Gordon. Captain and Mrs Havelock have now joined us, and they were old friends in Mauritius. Latterly Captain H. has been acting as Governor of Seychelles, but Sir Arthur requested that he should be appointed to Fiji, where, I believe, he is to act as treasurer. Mrs Havelock shares Lady Gordon's taste for remaining quietly at home with the children, so they stay together at Sydney, while I do the sight-seeing. Mrs Havelock has one little girl, Rachel, Lady Gordon's god-child,—such a quaint, nice, tiny child, whom Jack and Nevil regard as an interesting doll, requiring great care. They are the very nicest little couple possible,—coaxy, loving little things, and most picturesque. They are quite inseparable, and Lady Gordon has never left them for one night. Sir William and Lady Hackett have also arrived from Penang. He is to be judge in Fiji. Mr Maudslay, whom we met at Brisbane, has also joined our party. He is to be Sir Arthur's extra secretary, and if he finds the country suits him, will perhaps get permanent work in the Isles. He is devoted to botany, natural history, and kindred subjects of interest. Mr Maudslay and another gentleman escorted me to the Blue Mountains last week, where we put up at a very cosy inn and expeditionised. The gorges with great cliffs are very fine, and the valleys densely wooded. Sometimes we went down into deep gullies with tree-ferns far above our heads—very beautiful. When my two companions had to return to Sydney, I went

to the tiny cottage where I began this letter. My host was a wood-cutter, with a clean, tidy wife, and a number of very neat children. Such nice people! . More independent and outspoken and self-respecting than English of the same class; and the children are all so well brought. up. I had spent a long day alone on the verge of a gorge edged with great precipices, and was walking home calmly in the clear moonlight, when I perceived a small regiment coming to meet me. These were all the sturdy youngsters, in age ranging from five to ten, coming in search of my remains! The lion and the mice! They escorted me home cheerily, chatting right out on all subjects! It does seem odd to think of my being so at home, alone in these wild mountains, sitting all day by myself, miles from any human habitation, only seeing a pair of great eagles soaring overhead—no other living thing.

August 20, 1875.

The mails brought letters from you and your mother—both most welcome. But alas! my pleasure in receiving them was marred by terrible tidings, which reached us at the same moment, of a most horrible tragedy (of which you must have heard ere now)—namely, the treacherous murder of Commodore Goodenough, who, as you know, was the one to welcome me on my arrival in Sydney, and to give me house-room for the first fortnight of our stay. One of the sunniest-hearted, most genial men I ever met, universally popular, and justly loved by all under his command. He was quite out of the common,—clever, the noblest type of an English naval officer, and as good as good could be. I mean, thoroughly religious,—the religion of a life showing itself in such care for his men, and for whatever could advance Christianity in the Isles, where he was constantly cruising about, and of which his knowledge was very great. Personally, he had endeared himself to us all as a genuine good friend. His last cruise was to take Sir Arthur to Fiji, where he was present at his installation, when King Thakombau formally made personal submission to him as the Queen's representative. After this the Commodore took Sir Arthur in the Pearl to various Fijian isles; and then, dropping him, went off to look up some other groups. And I particularly want to impress upon you that these groups are as distinct as Russia, England, and India; and that the people of one may be incarnate devils, while the next are positively dove-like. Our Christianised Fijians are of the latter sort. But alas! the Com-

modore's cruise was to Santa Cruz—the same group in which, in 1871, Bishop Patteson was murdered. (I suppose you have read that most touching story.) Those islanders have always been difficult to deal with, not understanding good white men, and ready to avenge on them the kidnapping practised by the scum who haunt these seas in the labour traffic. So on this occasion the Commodore, as usual, landed unarmed, and went among the natives in friendly conversation, as he had done on a previous visit. Something unusual in their manner struck him, and he proposed a retreat to the boat, when suddenly, without a moment's notice, one of them deliberately shot him with an arrow, which pierced his side. He was able to walk to the boat; but a second arrow struck him in the head, and four of his young sailors were wounded. Even then, with what seemed mistaken kindness, he would not allow any bloodshed in revenge, but made his men fire blank-cartridge to frighten away the people, and then set fire to their wretched huts as a sufficient punishment. Well, at first, none of the wounds were considered dangerous, but, as almost invariably happens in that climate, after a few days *tetanus* (*i.e.*, lock-jaw) set in, which means certain death in torture. The Commodore lingered eight days. When he found he could not recover, he called each of his officers in turn, and kissed them, and said good-bye. Then he made them carry him on to the quarter-deck, where he said good-bye to all his men, and prayed for them. Then came the bitter end. One young sailor died just before him; another next day. All this time the Pearl was sailing southward to get cooler climate for the sufferers, and so it came to pass that they were within two days' sail of Sydney when, on Friday, his spirit passed away. On Monday the Pearl, with her ensign half mast, and yard-arms topped on end,[1] in token of her burden of sorrow, re-entered the harbour, and the terrible news spread like wildfire. I think some blessed angel must have whispered the truth to poor Mrs Goodenough, for she positively *knew* the moment the Government House orderly came to summon her cousin, Mr Stanley of Alderley, whose departure had providentially been delayed. The only word he had to utter was "Santa Cruz." That afternoon she was able to go on board and sit for three hours beside him (in the little cabin where they had spent so many happy hours, and where they always spent most of Sunday, going on board for service with the men). That was the one great comfort. On Wednesday she was able to follow him to the grave, with her two little sons. It

[1] Set all awry, in token of the death of her Commander.

was an immense public funeral. All the sailors, marines, naval reserve, training-ship, N.S.W. artillery, all public men, and thousands of citizens attended. His coffin was on one gun-carriage; those of the two sailors on another. They were laid on either side of him. He was only forty-four, and they were each about twenty years of age. . . .

I don't suppose you can fully realise how *home* this comes to us all. We have been so much thrown together, and we expected the Commodore to be so valuable an ally for Sir Arthur. To him the loss is not only that of a reliable friend, but literally of a right hand. And it is so disheartening that this second terrible shadow should overcloud the beginning of his work. It was bad enough before, when the awful scourge of measles was sweeping over the Isles, which literally carried off one-fourth of the whole population, marking the beginning of British rule for ever as a time of misery. You see my surroundings have become of awful earnest, instead of the merry little joke which I thought I was taking up in coming to Fiji. Not that I regret having come. On the contrary, I only rejoice to think that about ten days hence, if all is well, we shall be on our way there. A company of Royal Engineers are expected by the Whampoa in a few days, and as soon as they arrive, the Egmont is to take them and us to Fiji. I am glad to hear they are commanded by our old friend Colonel Pratt.

I will write again in a few days.

DUNTROON, NEAR THE MURRUMBIDGEE HILLS,
N.S. WALES, *Sept.* 2.

DEAR EISA,—Here I am really in the Australian bush, though I find it hard to reconcile the term with living in a fine large house, with every appliance of the most advanced civilisation. I can assure you we were glad to find such comfort at the end of a long and very cold journey.

The last detachment of our Fijian party started about three weeks ago—namely, the Havelocks and Sir William and Lady Hackett. Since their departure, Lady Gordon and the children have been living at Government House with the Robinsons; and Mr Maudslay and I have improved our time, first by exploring the Blue Mountains, where there is some grand scenery; and then we joined the Bishop of Grafton and Armadale and Mr Turner, and we came about two hundred miles, half by rail and half posting, to this place to see a true station. It is the property of the sole descendants of the old Campbells of Duntroon, on the Crinan Canal—most

hospitable Scots. There are about 30,000 sheep, 500 horses, and 1000 head of cattle on the station; a most comfortable house, and everything most luxurious; lots of horses for riding or driving; and I am getting over my belief that all Australian horses are buck-jumpers. Yesterday we had a great picnic to a waterfall eighteen miles off. I drove there, sketched, and rode back over fine grassy country. It was characteristic; for, as we went along, we picked up recruits till we numbered in all seventeen riders—the brake with four horses, a dogcart, a buggie, and a cart. As to roads, no one here thinks of them. Without the slightest hesitation about springs, the brake and four will turn off into the bush, drive in and out among the trees, grazing the old stumps which stick up in every direction, and the felled or half-burnt timbers with which the ground is everywhere strewn, dodging morasses, and choosing the easiest bits of creeks (where you think you *must* overturn), through fords, &c., &c., for mile after mile. In short, I shall never again believe in the possibility of breaking springs; for all carriages out here do the same thing, and they are all English built. An English coachman would utterly refuse to take the same carriage over a cart-road. A good deal of the country here is open, rolling downs, which afford very pleasant riding—miles and miles without a fence. We have just been to a ploughing match, at which the chief noteworthy fact was seeing all the farm lasses riding. Every lass has her pony; and a good many household servants arrive at their new situation on their own horse, just turn it out in their master's paddock, and catch and saddle it whenever they want to ride to the town. (This is necessary for fords rather than distance.) The country is moderately pretty; but the weather is so bitterly cold that I have been driven in almost every time I have tried to get a sketch, generally by sleet, one day by downright snow. Doesn't that sound strange to you, who are basking on heathery hills? One great charm of the bush here lies in the multitude of lovely cockatoos of every conceivable colour, especially pure white ones with lemon-coloured crests, or pearly-grey, "trimmed" with delicate pink. Some are very dark and handsome; and the green parrots are legion. The gentlemen have shot several, and given us their plumes. They have also shot several small bears,—most harmless little beasts.

Sir Arthur writes to Lady Gordon that the house he found ready at Nasova is very tolerable, and that he has begun to build the new rooms, so we hope to find our Fiji home ready when we arrive. Good-bye.

CHAPTER IV.

ARRIVE IN FIJI—TROPICAL LUXURY IN LEVUKA—KING THAKOMBAU —PLAGUE OF MEASLES.

From Mrs Havelock's House, Levuka, Isle of Ovalau, Fiji, *Sunday, Sept.* 26, 1875.

Here we actually are, safely landed in Fiji! We embarked on the Egmont on the 9th, and left Sydney at midnight. The Egmont was specially chartered to carry the Engineers. Their officers are Colonel Pratt, Captain Stewart, Mr Lake, and Dr Carew. Our only other companions were the Rev. Frederick and Mrs Langham, superintendent of the Wesleyan Mission, who have lived in the group for seventeen years, and have seen Fiji in all its changes; and many a tale of horror they have told me. They are a kind, genial couple, while she is a gentle little woman, whom it is hard to associate with such scenes as she has had to go through. Mr Langham made great friends with some of the Engineers; and a few of the more thoughtful men told him they were thinking that perhaps they might be of some use to the poor ignorant people,—perhaps teach some of them to read and write. Mr Langham expressed his pleasure at their good intentions, but added, "I think that you will find that some of them can read a little. We have already established some schools in Fiji,—*about fourteen hundred schools and nine hundred churches!*" I think the Engineers were not the only people who opened their eyes at this statement, which is strictly true!

Our voyage was not altogether pleasant. The Pacific proved false to its name, and favoured us with "a northerly buster," which is a much more rare occurrence than the "southerly buster," of which we have heard so much, and which did not seem to find much favour with any one except the beautiful albatross, who evidently gloried in the gale. We were all more or less ill—even the captain; and we liked it all the less, as the wind drove us out of our course and allowed us no chance of touching at Norfolk Island, as we had hoped to do.

Ten days' steam brought us to Khandavu, a remote isle lying far to the south of the group, and rarely visited by the regular white inhabitants, yet the only Fijian isle ever seen by casual

travellers, and consequently the text for many a lengthened description of the group.

On the following morning, Sunday 19th, we neared Ovalau, and found ourselves surrounded by many isles, of which we caught glimpses from time to time; but thick mist alternated with downpours of rain, and the isles looked grey and cold, like many much nearer home! It was early dawn when we found ourselves lying off Levuka, the capital; but the land was shrouded in dense mist, and not a glimpse could we obtain of the hills, which rise to a height of 3000 feet just behind the town. What mattered more, we were for nine hours in rough water outside the coral-reef (which encircles the isle of Ovalau at about a mile from the shore), and were actually within sound of the church bells, though we could see literally nothing till a lull in the storm revealed the passage—*i.e.*, the opening in the barrier reef, through which we passed into the quiet harbour of Levuka.

Just then a bright gleam of sunshine fell like a ray of promise on the little town, with its background of richly wooded hills, and dark craggy pinnacles far overhead, appearing above the white wreaths of floating mist. It was very lovely, and we were duly charmed; but our delight on arriving was somewhat damped by finding ourselves utterly unexpected. Great was the perturbation in Levuka when the inhabitants, coming peacefully out of church, perceived the Egmont quietly steaming in! Greater still was the excitement at Nasova, for no one seemed to have believed Lady Gordon was really coming, and her new house is still a mere skeleton. Even the Engineers were not expected for some days. Indeed, the official information of their having left England arrived about an hour after themselves, by a mail *viâ* New Zealand!

After some delay Sir Arthur came and took us ashore to Nasova, where we had lunch in the house which was built to be the council-chamber of Thakombau's Government—a place of many memories, the last being its use as a hospital-barrack during the recent terrible scourge of measles, from which, in spite of most tender nursing by Captain Olive, R.N., several of his men died. (I must explain that Captain Olive came here with Commodore Goodenough, and liked the place and people so much that he was appointed head of the native constabulary; and now he is a sort of additional A.D.C. to the Governor.)

In the evening we all returned on board the Egmont, as no other quarters were ready for us. Early next morning Lady Gordon and

the children went ashore, but I stayed on board, thinking I might as well secure a sketch of the town from the ship, as the view thence was lovely. In the afternoon Captain Knollys brought back the children, and Captain Havelock came to say that his wife had prepared a corner for me in her wee bungalow, charmingly perched on a breezy headland overlooking the harbour. This was pleasant news; and I soon found myself cordially welcomed to a most cosy little nest, very small, but one of the nicest little homes here.

You need not imagine that the bungalows here are like those bowers of delight I have described to you in other tropical countries. There are no wide verandahs, over which veils of luxuriant creepers weave garlands of delight, and no heavy scent of tropical blossoms perfumes the night air. Here few people have had time, or care, to cultivate flowers; and somehow those who have, have only succeeded on a *very* small scale. Even the fireflies, which we demand as a positive right in all tropical lands, are very few and very dim. As to the houses, they are all alike hideous, being built of wood (weatherboard is the word), and roofed with corrugated iron or zinc, on which the mad tropical rains pour with deafening noise; or else the burning sun beats so fiercely as well-nigh to stifle the inmates, to whom the luxuries of punkahs and ice are unknown; and even baths are by no means a matter of course, as in other hot countries.

We have not come to a land flowing with milk and honey in any sense. Daily food is both difficult to obtain and expensive. Fish is scarcely to be had at any price, though the sea swarms with many good kinds. Foreign vegetables are not to be got for love or money. The supply of fruit is very scant, consisting only of indifferent bananas, pine-apples, and oranges; and such as are brought to market are very poor. Milk is 1s. a quart; eggs, 3s. a dozen. Indifferent meat is about the same price as in England; poultry a good deal dearer. Washing varies from 4s. to 6s. a dozen, not including dresses or petticoats; and any lady who ventures to have her cuffs and collars, or other small pieces, washed at home, finds that not one of the scrubbing fraternity will undertake her work. To people accustomed to washing in India and Ceylon at 1s. a dozen, this is of itself a startling item. As to house-rent in Levuka, it is simply exorbitant: four guineas a-week being the moderate price paid, though taken by the year, for this tiny little one-storeyed bungalow, the whole of which, offices included, would easily fit into a moderately large room at home.

And this is the country to which the Colonial Office sends men at ridiculously small salaries, because, as they were told ere leaving England, living would cost them nothing, and they could save all their pay! Why, a man without private fortune could hardly live here at all! Of course, all imported goods are necessarily expensive, having to pay freight first to Sydney and then to Levuka.

But oh, above all, the miseries every housekeeper must daily endure in wrestling with a household of utter savages, even supposing her to be fortunate enough to get a good well-meaning set! Hitherto my ideas of native servants have been derived from the faultless cooks and other excellent attendants of India, quick, wide-awake, and neat-handed; whereas here you probably begin by having one or two Fijians, who look very intelligent, but prove hopelessly stupid, or rather utterly careless about learning our strange new ways. Day after day you must show them exactly how everything is to be done, and may be certain that each time it will be done wrong, and that the moment your back is turned they will proceed to twist up a bit of tobacco in a banana-leaf, and deliberately smoke their cigarette before touching the work you have given them. Probably they will follow you to ask where the matches are, and the only answer to any remonstrance is "*malua*" (by-and-by), a universal principle which is the bane of Fijian life. They are very honest, though sometimes they cannot resist borrowing large English bath-towels, which make most tempting *sulus* (*i.e.*, kilt); and nice cambric handkerchiefs are a tempting covering for carefully-dressed hair. It would be quite right and proper that they should use things belonging to their own chiefs, so we need not wonder that they cannot always discriminate. But the would-be housekeeper certainly needs boundless patience and unfailing gentleness. Any other course would make a Fijian altogether give up the attempt to learn anything.

Most people seem to prefer engaging servants from among the "foreign labour"—*i.e.*, men who have been brought from other groups on a three years' engagement to work. Most of these are truly hideous, but they are generally more diligent, and more anxious to learn their work, than the Fijians, who, as a rule, seem to be chiefly taken up with the contemplation of their own beauty: certainly many of them are unusually fine men, with strong muscular frame and good features, set off by a splendid head of frizzy hair—not so big as the gigantic mop they wore in heathen times, but still very large and carefully dressed. Some have really silky hair.

But in the matter of servants, the chief difficulty is to get a cook who knows anything at all. The very unsatisfactory person known as an English "plain cook" would here be a household treasure, compared with the English or Chinese wretches who by turns experiment on your unfortunate digestion, at not less than £1 per week. I cannot tell how many changes Mrs Havelock, Mrs Macgregor, Mrs de Ricci, Lady Hackett, and Mrs Abbey, have already had in their respective households; but anyhow, it would be a long list. Mrs Abbey and her husband have already done wonders towards getting Nasova made habitable, and have also started a farmyard and a garden; so, eventually, we shall have poultry and vegetables secured. A room has been found for Lady Gordon—very noisy and uncomfortable, however; and the children are for the present living in a pretty little house close by, belonging to the Thurstons, who will scarcely care to give it up for long; so the work at the new rooms is being pushed on in earnest. Good-bye for the present.

September 29, 1875.

. . . You may tell the boys that at last I really have seen the King of the Cannibal Islands, and a fine stately old fellow he is, with a bright intelligent countenance, and very chief-like, commanding carriage. I am told he was born about 1815, but he certainly appears older; his grey hair looks so strange round the brown face. He and several other high chiefs from various parts of the group have been staying at Driemba, a village of native houses just beyond Nasova, where they have been exchanging counsel on affairs of the State. I am told that he never appears so dignified as when he is addressing his brother chiefs on disputed questions. This afternoon they all came to Nasova for a farewell meeting with Sir Arthur ere returning to their respective dominions. Of course they had a solemn drinking of yangona, and one chief was appointed Roko of his district (*i.e.*, chief officer in charge); after which there was a very pretty *méké*,[1] when a number of the people assembled to dance and sing, dressed in native cloth, gracefully worn as drapery, with kilts and fringes of black water-weed, long reedy grass-coloured leaves or climbing ferns thrown over one shoulder and round the waist, also round the arms and below the knee. They danced a circular dance, turning sunwise, with many varied figures, and with immense action, while the non-dancers stood in the middle, making vocal music and beating time on a

[1] *Méké* describes either a song or a dance, or both combined.

drum. The words of these songs are very old, and never alter from the dialect in which they were at first composed, so they are not understood by the singers themselves. It was a very interesting scene.

But I do regret not having seen the grand ceremony of Sir Arthur's arrival, when (on the 25th June) Thakombau and all his sons, and five hundred vassals, came to Nasova, and formally did homage to him,—the first time the old chief has acknowledged any earthly superior. They brought the customary offerings of yams, turtle, &c. Then Thakombau's herald carried a yangona root, of which the Vuni Valu (*i.e.*, Root of War, as the old chief is generally called) broke off a small piece, which he placed in Sir Arthur's hands, with a few words of greeting. Sir Arthur formally accepted the root, and the Vuni Valu then addressed his people, saying he was glad to welcome the Queen's representative, and that he and all his people would obey her law as their only safeguard. Sir Arthur then addressed the chiefs, entreating them to put away their rivalries and jealousies, and work together for the common weal, suggesting to them as a parable, a canoe paddled by many men, some pulling backwards and some forwards; what would become of canoe and people?

A week later, Sir Arthur was invited by Thakombau to a great meeting of chiefs at Bau, where there was a very solemn ceremonial, yangona-drinking, when all present formally acknowledged him as their feudal lord, and solemnly pledged him as such. There were about two hundred chiefs present, a greater number than had probably ever assembled before; indeed, hitherto, the majority had lived in such a condition of ceaseless warfare, that they had never met save as foes. Even the tiny isle of Bau, on which the meeting was held, was formerly divided into seven antagonistic communities, at war one with the other. So this meeting really was a very important act of feudal homage, and all present joined in the *tama*, a curious deep-toned acclamation of *'ndua woh! ndua woh!* which is the vassal's salutation to his feudal lord, and which on this occasion proclaimed the Queen's representative as their superior, the first chief of Fiji. Now all the people who pass Nasova (Government House), either by sea or land, shout this greeting.

Certainly these brown men are a fine race. Such a contrast to the hideous blacks, of whom we saw a few, in Australia. The latter are such a wretched race, that it seems rather an advantage to humanity that they should die out; but it is a very different

matter with these stalwart intelligent fellows and bright friendly women. And really it is too sad to hear of the awful ravages of the measles in the early part of this year.

Do you realise that one-third of the whole population has died? —that is to say, 40,000 have died out of a population of 120,000. And the saddest thing of all is, that the terrible scourge was brought here in an English man-of-war, H.M.S. Dido, in which, last January, Thakombau and his sons returned from Sydney, where they had gone to visit Sir Hercules Robinson, and so prove their implicit confidence in their new friends and protectors. At Sydney, Ratu Joe and Ratu Timothy, the king's younger sons, took measles of a mild type, as did also two servants; and on the return voyage the old chief was slightly unwell,—so slightly, that the question of quarantine was never even suggested, and on reaching Levuka he was allowed at once to go ashore. Vassals and kindred came from all parts of the group to receive him, and, according to custom, fervently sniffed his hand or his face, thereby, alas! breathing the unsuspected poison. A few days later Mr Layard held a meeting on the Rewa, to which came chiefs from all parts of the interior of Viti Levu, representing the mountain tribes; there were about a thousand people present. To this meeting went some from Levuka, who had already caught the measles, without being as yet unwell. The infection spread, and the seeds of the disease were thus carried by the mountain chiefs to their respective districts, where it rapidly extended, proving fatal to a vast number of the people, and to nearly all the chiefs who had been present at the meeting with the white chief (Mr Layard). Of course it was only natural that they should attribute this to poison or witchcraft, and that the tribes who had only recently accepted Christianity, or were on the eve of doing so, should conclude that this was a Heaven-sent punishment for forsaking the gods of their fathers and giving up their lands to the white men. So they retreated to their mountain strongholds, banished their teachers, returned to heathenism, and openly repudiated the recently accepted British rule. We heard of an instance in which one of the teachers having died, even the Christian villagers deemed it expedient so far to return to their old customs as to bury his wife and children in the same grave with him as a propitiation to the spirit of the murrain. But, as a rule, the Christians stood their ground firmly, and the marvel is that so very few should have relapsed. Among the first victims was a very good man, Ratu Savanatha, one of the most able and

intelligent of the chiefs, and who had done all in his power to explain to the Kai Tholos (*i.e.*, people of the mountains) the advantages of English rule.

So from every corner of the group came tidings that the plague was raging. Whole villages were stricken down—young men and maidens, old men and children, lay dead or dying. The handful of white people, as a rule, did their utmost to help, and gave all the food and medicine they possessed; but their own labourers and their own children were stricken, and needed more care than they could give; nor were there lacking bad white men who went about telling the natives that the disease had been purposely introduced to kill them and get their lands. So the plain medical directions which were at once published were ignored, and the white man's medicine too often refused, from a conviction that it would cause certain death. Native medicines, and bad, ill-cooked food, made matters worse. Of course anything like isolation of the sick was impossible; nor could they be prevented from rushing to the nearest water to cool their burning fever. How could men who are continually bathing and swimming be persuaded that this could harm them? So the rash was thrown in, and congestion of the lungs and dysentery of the most malignant type were brought on in thousands of cases.

Apart from this irresistible craving to lie down in cool streams, it would have been a hard task for the poor sufferers to keep themselves dry, for an unparalleled rainfall converted whole districts into dreary swamps, where dysentery and starvation completed the work of death. The people were too weak to go to their gardens (which are often far away on some steep hillside), and so there were none to carry food; besides, a cold wretched walk through the long wet reeds was almost certain doom. At last the few who were well began to herd together, forsaking the sick, and scarcely exerting themselves to give them a drink of water, or prepare such food as they had. In some districts, as in the isle of Ono, the people were literally starving, digging up wild roots, and eating old cocoa-nuts only fit for making oil. Then they lay down, all alike stricken, for the most part awaiting the fate they deemed inevitable, with that strange apathetic calm which characterises a race wholly indifferent to life. At last the living were unable to bury the dead, and there was good cause to dread lest a worse pestilence, in the form of typhus, should be produced by the horrible putrefaction which poisoned the air. On the king's little island of Bau (the special home of the nobles, and which is small

and overcrowded), all were ill at once. Canoes bearing the dead were ceaselessly crossing to the mainland, where the graveyards lie; the cries of mourners and the death-drums resounded day and night. There, too, the people were starving; they had no strength to go ashore to the mainland for food. Many of the finest chiefs and teachers died.

At the Missionary Institute all the students were down; but thanks to unwearied nursing day and night, most of them recovered.

Of course all the native constabulary were seized; but, thanks to the devoted care of Lieutenant Olive, late of the Royal Marines, comparatively few died. He turned Nasova into a great hospital, and distributed his 150 patients all over it, appointing those who were less ill guards over the very sick, to prevent their yielding to the fatal impulse to rush into the cool blue sea, which lay so temptingly at their very door. By dint of indefatigable exertions, and a generosity that spared not the utmost expenditure of his private means on comforts, and indeed necessaries, for his sick men, he had the unspeakable satisfaction of saving all but ten, and these fell victims to their own craving for the cool waters. They managed to escape from their guards, and lay down in the sea, thus sealing their own doom.

All the details that come from every isle are alike harrowing. Whole towns are deserted, every house closed. The dead have been buried in their own houses, and these having fallen, the raised foundation on which every Fijian house is built has now become a platform on which lie the graves of the whole family, marked by the red leaves of dracæna or other plants. Perhaps one wretched orphan alone survives. The coast towns seem to have suffered more severely than those in the mountains, owing to the fact of their being generally built in mangrove-swamps, or some other morass, as being better concealed and more easily defended in the inter-tribal wars which have hitherto been of ceaseless occurrence. We are told of some teachers who fled from their villages, but were overtaken by the disease and died. The majority acted as noble examples to their flocks, but many died at their posts; indeed one district alone has lost *ninety*, and the district next to it *forty*, native ministers and teachers, all carefully trained men,—a loss not to be quickly replaced. Of the 40,000 who are computed to have perished, 35,000 were personally known to the Wesleyan teachers as being either professedly Christians or under instruction.

It appears that the measles, which we consider such a simple and

infantile complaint, invariably assumes a character more like the plague when first introduced in one of these South Sea isles. In 1860 it was unfortunately taken to the Mare Loyalty group, and one-fifth of the population died. The Dido unfortunately put three persons ashore on Norfolk Island, on her way to Fiji; they also carried the measles, which spread to the whole community. Afterwards she landed some time-expired labourers at the Isle Malicolo, and there too, it is reported that many have died.

This is the first epidemic of any sort that has visited Fiji, and its results naturally make the introduction of any other infectious disease a thing to be dreaded. Just imagine how appalling would be the results of small-pox, for instance! And as hitherto there have been no quarantine laws, this might have been brought by any vessel. Even now there is the greatest anxiety lest it should be carried by the large steamers which call at Khandavu every month, on their way to and from San Francisco, Australia, and New Zealand. Of course the strictest quarantine regulations have now been issued; and Dr Mayo is stationed at Khandavu to enforce them, as also to vaccinate the whole population, and very monotonous work he finds it, however necessary. Happily the people take rather kindly to the operation. They have a fancy for making scars on their skin, both as a remedy and an ornament, so the process is rather attractive; and they come voluntarily to the doctor (whom they call *matai-ni-mate*, "carpenter of death") to request his good offices. Now you will think I am never going to stop writing, so I may as well say good-bye.

CHAPTER V.

LEVUKA—THE HARBOUR—CORAL-REEF—CHURCHES—ANIMAL LIFE—PLANTS—HOW TO BREW YANGONA—PICNICS—SPEAR-THROWING.

With Mrs Havelock, Levuka,
Saturday, October 2, 1875.

Dear Nell,—I cannot say how I long to have you here to share the delight of sitting on this high headland overlooking the lovely sea. The air is balmy, and we almost always have a faint delicious breeze (sometimes it is anything but faint!) From this tiny garden

we look down through a veil of glittering palm-leaves, brightened by a foreground of rosy oleanders, and vivid scarlet hybiscus; and between these glimmer the blue waters of the Pacific, and dreamy isles which seem to float on the horizon. I think, on a clear day, we can count eight or ten of these.

Just below us lies the harbour, like a calm sea-lake, on which ride vessels of all sizes: trading schooners and brigs, which carry the produce of the isles to Australia and New Zealand. Larger vessels trade with Germany. Then there is an occasional man-of-war or merchant steamer, and always native canoes passing to and fro, with great three-cornered yellow mat sails, and brown men, who often sing quaint *mékés* as they approach the town, with an odd sort of accompaniment on their *lali*, or wooden drum. The chiefs' canoes carry a flag, and sometimes a fringe of streamers of native cloth floating from the sail; and the canoe itself is adorned at both ends with glistening white shells like poached eggs (*Cyprea oviformis*). Sometimes several canoes pass us racing, or they meet, and their sails at different angles form pretty groups. How striking a scene it must have been, when, in the old days, the chiefs sailed forth to war at the head of a large fleet of these! On one such occasion, when Thakombau went to attack Verata, he mustered a hundred and twenty-nine canoes. Only think how bravely they must have flown before the breeze, with the golden sunlight on the yellow sails! These canoes are balanced by large outriggers—that is, a beam of wood, or piece of cocoa-palm stem, floating alongside, and attached to the canoe by bamboos. They are most picturesque, and the great mat sails, seen against the intense blue of the water, are a valuable addition to the scene. Indeed the eye that loves exquisite colour can never weary here.

The rich blue of the harbour is separated from the purplish indigo of the great ocean by a submarine rainbow of indescribable loveliness. This is caused by the coral-reef, which produces a gleaming ray as if from a hidden prism. The patches of coral, sea-weed, and sometimes white sand, lying at irregular depths, beneath a shallow covering of the most crystalline emerald-green water, produce every shade of aqua marine, mauve, sienna, and orange, all marvellously blended. The shades are continually varying with the ebb and flow of the tide, which at high water covers the reef to the depth of several feet, while at low tide patches here and there stand high and dry, or are covered by only a few inches of water; treacherous ground, however, on which to land, as the sharp coral spikes break under the feet, cutting the thickest leather,

and perhaps landing you in a hole several feet in depth, with still sharper coral down below. The highest edge of the reef lies towards the ocean, and a line of dazzling white surf marks where the great green breakers wage their ceaseless warfare on the barrier; but the passage through the reef is plainly marked by a break in the white line, and a broad roadway of deep blue connecting the inner waters with the great deep; and this, again, passes in gradual gradations of colour, from the intense blue of the harbour to the glittering green of the shallow water on the inner side of the reef. Altogether it is most fascinating. The scene is loveliest at noon, when the sun is right overhead, and lights up the colours beneath the water on the coral caves. Also you must be some way up the hill to get a good view of the reef. Of the radiant opal tints which overspread sea, isles, and sky, at the outgoings of morning and evening, I need not tell you; our own northern shores supply sunrise and sunset colours more vivid than we often see in the tropics.

This afternoon has been one of unmitigated enjoyment spent on the reef, where for so many days I have enviously watched the Fijian girls disporting themselves at low tide, and bringing back baskets full of all sort of curious fish, many of them literally rainbow-coloured. Some are most gorgeous, and are called parrot-fish. They have large bony beaks, rather than ordinary mouths, to enable them to feed on the coral, which at certain seasons are said to be "in flower," and very unwholesome; so we always eat these radiant fish with some qualms, and not without good reason, for some people have had the ill-luck to get poisoned, and have suffered severely in consequence.

Our great authority on all questions of natural history is Mr Layard (brother of Nineveh Layard), who, before annexation, held the office of British Consul in this place. He and his son have a special talent for capturing strange monsters of the deep, and I never call on Mrs Layard without her showing me some new object of interest. They live in a large old wooden house, built on the very edge of the water; in fact, the sea washes up underneath the verandah, which opens on to a long wooden pier in the last stages of decay. I should think the position most unsafe, in view of possible tidal waves, especially as a small mountain stream (which occasionally becomes a torrent) washes one side of the house,—so that from one window the inmates can have fresh-water fishing, and from the other salt. That old pier has been a source of infinite pleasure to many. It enables Mrs Layard to have a little fresh air, and a

small walk, without venturing among the broken bottles and mud which form the beach; and her husband and son thence capture many strange creatures when they have not time to row off to the reef, which is, of course, the very ideal of a naturalist's happy hunting-grounds, and there they took me this afternoon. You really cannot imagine anything more lovely than it was. The first essential is to go in a boat which draws very little water, and which has no new paint to be considered. Then when the tide is low, and the sea without a ripple, you float idly over the coral-beds, suffering your boat to lie at rest or drift with the current, as a stroke of the oars would disturb the clear surface of the water, beneath which lie such inexhaustible stores of loveliness. Every sort and kind of coral grow together there, from the outstretched branches, which look like garden shrubs, to the great tables of solid coral, on which lie strewn shells and sponges, and heaps of brain and mushroom corals.

These living shrubs assume every shade of colour: some are delicate pink or blue; others of a brilliant mauve; some pale primrose. But vain is the attempt to carry home these beautiful flowers of the sea; their colour is their life. It is, in fact, simply a gelatinous slime, which drips away, as the living creatures melt away and die, when exposed to the upper air. So the corals we know in England are merely skeletons, and very poor substitutes for the lovely objects we see and covet in their native condition.

Besides, like everything in that submarine garden, much of its charm is derived from the medium through which we behold it—the clear translucent water, which spreads a glamour of enchantment over objects already beautiful, glorifying the scarlet corallines and the waving branches of green and brown weed, wherein play exquisite fish of all vivid hues and sizes, from the tiniest gem-like atoms which flash in the light like sapphires and rubies, to the great big-headed parrot-fish, which has strong white teeth specially adapted for crunching the coral, and thence extracting the insects on which he feeds.

There are great red fish, and purple-green fish, and some of bright gold, with bars or spots of black; but loveliest of all are the shoals of minute fish, some of the most vivid green, others of a blue that is quite dazzling. Some have markings so brilliant that I can only compare them to peacocks' feathers. These all congregate in families, and a happy life they surely must have. Some of the loveliest of these are so tiny that you can keep a dozen in a tumbler; others are about the length of your finger. Only think what a prize they

would be if we could convey them safely to the great aquariums of Britain! Besides these myriads of minute fish, there are all manner of living creatures which peep out from their homes beneath the ledges and crevices of the coral,—vigilant crabs of all sizes and colours, and sea-anemones in endless variety, and wonderful specimens of Echini.

Picture to yourself first cousins of the fragile sea-eggs which used to rejoice our childhood, and make us marvel how they ever came ashore unbroken. These Fijian relations are armed with spikes like slate-pencils, nearly as thick as your middle finger, and a good deal longer. I think Mr Layard said their name is Acrocladia. To-day we captured a most extraordinary creature, a star-fish, which seemed as if it must be nearly related to the sea-urchin, for its fifteen arms were each covered with grey and orange spines, very sharp, precisely like those of the echinus, while the under side was a mass of pale-yellow fleshy feelers, like those of a sea-anemone, with a sucker at the end of each. It was a strange and most interesting creature when we first beheld it, but looked very unhappy when it found itself in a bucket; and when reduced to "a specimen," it will be a poor ugly object.[1]

We saw a great number of large star-fish, of the deepest Albert blue, and innumerable other beautiful things, which gained greatly in interest from being shown to me by one so familiar with them all as is Mr Layard. How you would delight in such an afternoon as this has been, and how the boys would revel in it! It is not altogether pleasant, however, to try walking on the reef, and you generally have to get natives to dive for anything particularly good. They never seem afraid of the many sharp teeth and stinging creatures which may dart out from the coral; and not being troubled by over-much raiment, they dive in and out like fishes (though, as a general rule, they do dislike wetting their hair). To them the reef is a source of endless amusement and profit, and at low tide there are generally some canoes lying in the shallow water; while the girls and young men are hunting for the spoils of the sea, which they carry in three-cornered baskets, slung from the waist. Of course they do not care to spoil their simple raiment with salt water, so a considerable portion of their dress on these occasions consists of deep fringes and garlands of many-coloured leaves, which are a most becoming drapery, with their rich brown skin and tawny head.

The existence of these barrier-reefs is an unspeakable benefit to

[1] Acanthaster solaris.

the isles, supplying them with natural breakwaters and harbours, surrounding each with a lagoon of calm, shallow water, on which the smallest boats can ply as safely as on an inland lake, and within shelter of which they can, in most places, pass from one isle to another. There is invariably a passage through the reef opposite the mouth of any river, as the coral insect cannot live within the influence of fresh water. Thus an entrance is secured to the haven of rest, and a very strait and narrow way it often is, and one which calls for careful steering, when the angry breakers are dashing in mad fury on the reef on either side—great rolling waves curling upward in a succession of mighty walls of green water, and falling in such a surging cataract of foam as would make short work of the luckless canoe that should drift within their reach. Once inside the reef all is secure, save when some unusual storm troubles even these calm waters, as it might ruffle the surface of any lake.

It is hard to realise that these mighty sea-walls are indeed the work of microscopic insects,—star-like creatures, invisible to the naked eye; but so it is. It is said they cannot live at a greater depth than thirty fathoms, yet the height of the coral-wall is in many cases double or treble this measurement, and in some cases a sheer descent of two hundred fathoms has been found. The inference is, that many of these isles, as well as the ocean-bed from which the coral rises, are gradually subsiding, and the insects are continually working upwards. In some cases the island has altogether disappeared, and there remains only a circular or crescent shaped reef, perhaps fringed with cocoa-palms, encircling a calm lagoon of clear green water, the sea all round being of the deepest blue. These are called *atolls*, and are sometimes many miles in circumference. Some scarcely rise above the water-level, and only a ring of white coral sand betrays their existence.

The coral-reef gives us various hints of the rise and fall in the level of the ocean-bed, for while some islands have wholly disappeared, others are even now emerging from the waters. In some groups coral-cliffs have been found forty feet above the water-level —in other words, above the height where the insect could live, thus showing clearly that these rocks have been gradually upheaved. But in the Fijian group there are few islands which are not almost encircled by a barrier-reef of considerable depth, which would seem to indicate that they are actually subsiding. However, the process is likely to be a slow one, and a matter of no great moment to the present generation, or their successors for many years to come.

I have spun a longer yarn than I intended, but it will help you to realise the sort of things that I am daily looking at, and will make the boys wish they were with me.

Monday, 4th October.

Dear Jean,— . . . I have just come in from such a scramble. Certainly those hills of Ovalau are most tantalising. From the sea they do look so attractive, and not particularly difficult to ascend; but when it comes to the attempt, you find that even in the rare instances where the semblance of a footpath exists, it takes a very goodr scambler to follow it, over great boulders of rock, or up almost perpendicular banks of soapy mud. Should you attempt to leave the path, you find it almost impossible to force a passage through the dense underwood; and even the tracks, which from the sea look like grass, turn out to be tall reeds, reaching far above your head, and matted together with strong vines (which totally prevent your advance), and large spiders' webs, which cling to your face and hair. Still, it is worth a considerable exertion, for the reward of at length reaching some point whence you can look down on the lovely sea and all the far-away isles.

This island is itself quite beautiful, though by no means a desirable one on which to establish a capital, as it consists entirely of very steep hills, rising to a height of about 3000 feet, crowned with great crags, and rent by deep gorges densely wooded. The only available building land is a narrow strip on the edge of the sea; and though, of course, the lower spurs of the hills may gradually be dotted with villas, there is no possibility of extending the town unless by expensive terracing—a game which would certainly not be worth the candle, as saith the proverb.

I must say the little town greatly exceeds our expectations. We had imagined it was still the haunt of uproarious planters and white men of the lowest type, described by visitors a few years ago, instead of which we find a most orderly and respectable community, of about 600 whites, inhabiting 180 wooden houses. We are told that the reformation in the sobriety of the town is partly due to the Good Templars, who here muster a very considerable brotherhood. Doubtless their work is greatly facilitated by the increased price of gin, which in former days flowed like water, at the modest price of one shilling a bottle, but has now risen to five times that sum. It used to be said that ships needed no chart to bring them to Fiji, for they would find the way marked by floating gin-bottles, increasing in numbers as they approached the group.

Those were the days when men meeting at noonday to discuss grave matters of business found their deliberations assisted by a jug of raw gin, to be drunk in tumblers as other men would drink water! Certainly if the multitude of broken bottles which strew the beach were any evidence of the amount of liquor consumed, we might imagine that the old drinking days were not yet wholly forgotten.

The principal shops (or stores, as they are called) lie along the beach, and, without much outward show, are fully stocked with all things needful, which a European can buy at about one-third more than he would pay in England. But by a singular phase of commercial morality, a native wishing to purchase the same article is invariably made to pay a very much higher price, and this is done quite openly, as a generally accepted condition of trade! There are several respectable boarding-houses, and two or three hotels, where the planters find quarters when they come to this great metropolis.

I am rather afraid you will not have a very dignified idea of our capital, when I confess that our great main street has only houses on one side, and the street itself is only a strip of rocky, muddy, or shingly sea-beach. Various attempts have been made to build up a low sea-wall, but this is invariably washed away by the next high tide. How the houses escape is a mystery.

One thing that would strike you as peculiar would be to see a whole town without one chimney. There is a house which apparently has a couple, but these are only ventilators. You would also be impressed by our magnificent lighthouses—two wooden pyramids, which, seen at a certain angle to one another, mark the passage through the coral-reef. These are, I think, the only representatives of lighthouses in this most dangerous group. But at present the colony is too poor to build any, and Mother England is too stingy to allow us any.

But whatever else is lacking, churches flourish. Besides the Wesleyan native chapels, there are a large Wesleyan church for the white population, a Roman Catholic church, and an Episcopal one. We, of course, belong to the latter; but at present our parson, Mr Floyd, is in New Zealand, so all the Governor's staff take it by turns to officiate, two in the morning and two in the evening. They appear in surplices, and take their part well. Last Sunday morning Mr Le Hunte read prayers, and Captain Havelock one of Robertson's sermons. Yesterday morning Captain Havelock read prayers, and Mr Maudslay preached a Kingsley. In the evening

Mr Eyre read, and Mr Le Hunte preached; but I forget his subject, for such a tremendous storm of rain came down on the zinc roof that even his voice was drowned. After services we waited in vain for half an hour, and then waded home, fully a mile. Nurse and Mrs Abbey very sensibly left their dresses and bonnets in church!

Mr Floyd has one of Bishop Patteson's native clergy to assist him in a mission to the foreign labour, the Church of England most wisely judging it best to leave the Fijians wholly in the care of the Wesleyans, whose mission here has been so marvellously successful. But the foreign labour does seem almost a hopeless field. They are brought here from a multitude of isles, all talking different languages, and only remain three years in the group, so that the very small numbers that can be reached, even of those who find situations in Levuka, can scarcely be expected to learn much before they have to be sent back to their own isles as "time-expired labour." Still, the little church does fill in the afternoons with a strangely motley congregation, and doubtless some seeds of good are carried back to the distant isles, which may bear fruit in due season.[1]

There is yet another congregation which I have forgotten to mention — namely, our fellow-passengers, the company of Royal Engineers, who, finding the little English church already crowded, hold service by themselves in a thatched shed on the shore, open all round to admit the sweet sea-breeze, and overshadowed by large dark trees. It makes a very cool chapel, and we often linger as we pass to listen to the pleasant English voices and hearty singing.

As I mentioned to you before, no preparation had been made to receive the Engineers on their arrival here, so they had to find temporary quarters for themselves till they could decide where to place their barracks, and then build them. It was no easy matter to find healthy quarters for so large a body of men in such a place, and Colonel Pratt was at first somewhat perplexed. By great good fortune a large empty storehouse was found half-way between Nasova and the town, so there they are housed for the present, and make the best of very uncomfortable quarters. They do look so hot, poor fellows, going about in uniform, with small caps, under

[1] This little beginning promises to become an extensive movement, a visit from Bishop Selwyn having stirred up interest in the matter. I hear that the Chief Justice, and a considerable number of young men, now attend the afternoon meeting as teachers, with the happiest results, the immigrants fully appreciating the kindly feeling thus shown to them.

just such a sun as that which makes men in India wear solah *topees* and carry white umbrellas. Here (where the inhabitants take their ideas from Australia or New Zealand) such precautions are considered as unnecessary, as are all the luxuries which others, coming from India or kindred lands, would deem necessaries. The Engineers, however, have sun-helmets somewhere, but they are supposed to have gone on a little voyage by themselves to Melbourne, and are expected to arrive in the course of a few months! Colonel Pratt had considerable difficulty in getting either cool clothes or mosquito-nets for his men. The authorities could not understand why he should require them; and when he suggested that it was usual to supply such articles to troops on tropical service, the reply he received was—"Why, you don't mean to say that Fiji is in the tropics?" That it is so we are all very well aware, but I think this is the best tropical climate any of us have yet found; there are few days when we have not a balmy breeze and soft grey clouds, and even the midsummer heat of December rarely shows a thermometer above 90°. I cannot find out that there is any especially rainy season, or any which is exempt from rain. Heavy thunderstorms are frequent at present, and I am told that about Christmas there is often much rain and an occasional hurricane. The latter, however, only happens once in several years; so you need not be in any special alarm for the safety of your dearly beloved sister, C. F. G. C.

In one respect we are greatly disappointed in this place—*there are scarcely any flowers.* This strikes us all the more, as we have come here direct from Australia, where we left the whole country literally aflame with blossom. You cannot fancy anything more lovely. And here in the tropics, where people always vainly imagine that flowers are so abundant, we have fewer than in any place I have yet been to. Scarcely any house has even a flower-bed round the windows; and the very best garden in the place would, except for the beauty of its crotons and other shrubs, scarcely be dignified with the name in England; and yet infinite care is expended on it, and a handful of roses or other blossoms of any sort is the greatest boon its owner can bestow on us. As to wild flowers, I have walked day after day till I was weary, without finding as many flowers as would fill a small vase.

The ferns, however, are exceedingly lovely. Innumerable species grow in richest profusion in every damp ravine, and great tufts of birds'-nest and other ferns cling to the mossy boughs of the grey

old trees. Every here and there you come on a rocky stream or shady pool round which they cluster in such luxuriance and variety, that it makes you long to transport the whole fairy-like dell to some place where all fern lovers might revel in its beauty. And this is only the undergrowth; for the cool shade overhead is produced by the interwoven fronds of great tree-ferns—their exquisite crown of green supported by a slender stem from twenty to thirty feet high, up which twine delicate creepers of all sorts, which steal in and out among the great fronds, and so weave a canopy of exquisite beauty. Loveliest of all are the delicate climbing-ferns, the tender leaves of which—some richly *fringed* with seed—hang mid-air on long hair-like trails, or else, drooping in festoons, climb from tree to tree, forming a perfect network of loveliness. It is a most fairy-like foliage, and the people show their reverence for its beauty by calling it the *Wa Kolo*, or God's fern.

I ought to mention that though there are no flowers within reach, there are several flowering trees with unattainable, and, happily, not very tempting blossoms. They are all alike remarkable for having a most insignificant calyx, and being almost entirely composed of a great bunch of silky stamens which fall in showers on the ground below. The most attractive of these is the *kaveeka*, or Malay apple, which bears tufts of crimson blossom especially attractive to certain lovely scarlet and green parrots with purple heads, and which in due season bears a very juicy though insipid crimson or white fruit. These parrots are few and far between; and I miss the flocks of bright wings which so delighted me in my glimpse of Australian bush.—Good-bye once more.

Sunday, 31st October.

Dear Eisa,—The anxiously expected mail came in this morning and brought your welcome letter. . . . I am still staying with Mrs Havelock, for the new rooms at Nasova progress slowly. It is very difficult to push on work in a country where *malua* (by-and-by) is the reigning principle in every action of life. But for myself, individually, I am most cosy here, and we all meet continually. Lady Gordon has instituted weekly picnics just for our own party, chiefly to get the gentlemen away from their incessant writing.

We have already had three of these, so we have seen a good deal of this isle of Ovalau, and very lovely it is. We always go by boat; indeed there are no paths (except a footpath along the shore) where a sane man would venture to ride even if there were horses, which there are not. Only an enterprising butcher's boy

ventures to clamber up day by day to bring needful supplies to such houses as are perched on the steep hillsides. Captain Olive also has a horse; and now Nasova owns a pony on which Abbey gallops into Levuka to forage for the house. The astonishment of the natives at first sight of a horse knew no bounds. They gathered round it, exclaiming, "Oh, the great pig!" and one rashly approached to pull its tail, and was considerably startled by receiving a very severe kick.

I suppose you know that one of the remarkable peculiarities of these isles is the strange lack of animal life. There were literally no indigenous four-footed creatures except rats and flying-foxes, and even the native rat has died out since foreign rats arrived from ships. Even the pigs, which in some places now run wild in the jungle, were originally introduced by the Tongans, who also brought cats, ducks, and fowls. As to other animals, such names as *seepi* (mutton), *goti* (goat), *pussi* (cat), *ose* (horse), *collie*[1] (dog), and *bullama kow* (beef), sufficiently betray their foreign origin. Really I do miss the troops of monkeys so familiar in India and Ceylon.

Happily the list of Fijian reptiles is equally small, so that flies and mosquitoes are almost the only creatures we have to combat, and certainly they are an irritating plague. We know that centipedes and scorpions do exist, but they are very rare. I wish I could say as much for the cockroaches which infest every house, and are in their turn devoured by large spiders. I lay awake this morning watching the process. The unlucky cockroach contrived to get entangled in a strong web, and old Mr Spider darted out and tied him up securely, and then feasted at his leisure. Of course we carefully cherish these spider allies, and glory in webs which would greatly horrify your housemaids. The ants are also most energetic friends, and organise burial parties for the cockroaches as fast as we can kill them. Every morning we see solemn funerals moving across the verandah to the garden, and these are parties of about one hundred of the tiniest ants dragging away the corpse of a large cockroach.

Happily serpents are almost unknown, and the few that exist are not venomous. So we walk through densest underwood, among dead leaves and decaying timber, without fear of meeting anything more alarming than innocent lizards or an occasional land-crab. Of lizards I have seen a large green kind, and scores of a tiny blue and bronze, which flash like jewels in the sunlight.

[1] More probably derived from the same root as the Maori word *kuri*, dog.

Equally pleasant is the total absence of the countless species of thorny plants with which the whole jungle in Ceylon seemed to bristle. There I was for ever being torn and scratched by cruel thorns, and every shrub seemed armed with sharp needles—even the stems of certain kinds of palm-trees being covered with myriad little daggers and darning-needles two or three inches in length. Here the wild citron is the only thorny tree I have observed, and even that was not indigenous; so the contrast is highly in favour of Fiji, especially in the absence of serpents and other venomous reptiles. But, on the other hand, Fiji has traps for the unwary quite peculiar to itself. The commonest of these is the tree-nettle, which really is a large forest-tree. Beautiful but treacherous are its large glossy leaves, veined with red or white, most attractive to the eye, but anguish to the touch;—days will pass ere the pain of that burning sting subsides. However, forewarned is forearmed, and you are in no danger of accidentally touching these large showy trees, as you so often do the insignificant but obtrusive little nettle of our own woods.

There are, however, several other trees which are so intensely poisonous that it is dangerous even to touch them accidentally. One of these is the *kaukaro*, or itch-plant, from which exudes a milky juice causing agony, especially if the tiniest drop should come, even near the eye. Instances have occurred when a man has ignorantly selected this wood, either as timber from which to fashion his canoe, or a spar suitable for his mast; and incautiously sitting on the wood while carpentering, has discovered, when too late, that the subtle poison had entered by every pore, and that his whole body was rapidly breaking out in angry spots, causing an irritation utterly unbearable, and lasting for months, sometimes years.

As regards the general foliage, it is almost identical with that of Ceylon, though perhaps scarcely so rich. This, however, varies much on the different isles, and Ovalau is more noted for cliffs than for rich foliage. We shall see that in glory when we go to Taviuni. Here the only palm-trees are cocoa-nuts very much battered with the wind; and I miss the beautiful *kittool* and several other palms which I loved in Ceylon. But I recognise various old friends, especially the large croton-tree, with silvery leaves and tufts of white blossom. Here it is known as the candle-nut, and reigns as monarch over an immense family of crotons of every shade of eccentricity both of form and colour. But the most gorgeous varieties are imported from isles nearer the equator.

There are several splendid trees which are quite new to me, being peculiar to the South Seas. Such are the *ivi*[1] (pronounced *eevie*), or Tahitian chestnut, and the *ndelo*,[2] with large glossy leaves like the india-rubber tree. Both these are valuable as affording cool, deep shade. There is also the *vutu*,[3] with its blossoms like tufts of silk fringe; the *tavola*,[4] or native almond-tree; and the *ndawa*, whose young leaves are bright crimson, and give a gleam of colour to the general expanse of green. Then there is the *mbaka*, which grows like the sacred banyan of India, beginning its life as a humble parasite, and in old age presenting an intricate network of white stems, pillars, and roots. It bears a very small leaf.

The commonest scrub-foliage is a hybiscus, with bluish-grey leaf, and pale primrose-coloured blossom, with a dark claret heart: it is a pretty flower on the tree, but dies when gathered. The inner bark yields a fibre which is greatly valued by the natives, and which they split and die yellow, red, or black, and make fringe kilts, to be worn either as sole raiment or over the *sulu*. It is also used by the fisher-folk for making their nets, especially the turtle-nets; but several other fibres are used for this purpose.

On this island there really is no level ground at all; and you would marvel where the people contrive to raise their crops, for the steep hills rise from the sea-beach. But if you were to follow the course of the picturesque streamlets which find their way down dark-wooded ravines, you would find that every available corner is laid out in tiny terraced fields, or rather miniature swamps, in which are cultivated the yams, *taros*, and *kumalas* (sweet potatoes), which are the staple of native food. In taste they somewhat resemble coarse potatoes, especially the yams, which sometimes attain a gigantic size—from one to ten feet in length—and are said sometimes to weigh 100 lb. In some districts there are two yam crops in a year.

The *taro* is of a bluish-grey colour, and both in appearance and consistency resembles mottled soap. Still I rather like it. Its leaves are like those of our own arum on a large scale (it is of the same family, *Arum esculentum*). One kind grows to a gigantic size, and its huge rich green leaves stand six or seven feet above their watery bed. You may often see a few plants of this giant arum close to the door of a house, and very ornamental they are; but the object for which they were placed there is to ward off the entrance of death or devils!

[1] *Ivi*—Inocarpus edulis.
[2] *Ndelo*—Calophyllum-inophyllum.
[3] *Vutu*—Barringtonia.
[4] *Tavola*—Terminalia.

The leaves of the yam are like those of a convolvulus, as is also its habit of growth, each plant being trained along a tall reed. There are a great many different kinds, including one the root of which is throughout of a vivid mauve.

There are also tiny banana-gardens in every little crevice of the rock, and their great glossy leaves look cool and pleasant. There are about thirty varieties grown on these isles, and some bear immense pendent bunches with from one to two hundred fruits on each. The young inner leaf, which has not unrolled itself, is like the finest silk, and when warmed over the fire becomes quite waterproof, and is used as such. It is also used to tie up little bundles of sweet, oily pudding, in which the people delight. Do you realise that a banana or plantain leaf is from three to four feet long, and from ten to fifteen inches wide? Sometimes the girls carry them as parasols, and a very attractive picture they make.

There is one fruit-bearing plant here which is just like a natural umbrella—namely, the *papaw*, which carries a handsome crown of deeply indented leaves on a tall curiously diapered stem, round which hangs a cluster of green and golden fruit, useful when unripe as a vegetable, and when ripe as a fruit. I am told that the leaves have the valuable quality of making tough meat tender if it is wrapped up or cooked in them; and also that they are useful in washing, being saponaceous, so that if soaked with dirty clothes they save a considerable amount of soap.

Another plant, which to you is familiar as ornamental greenhouse foliage, is the dracæna (or ti-tree, as it is called in the colonies), which here is grown for the sake of its root, which is so large as sometimes to weigh 40 lb., and which answers the purpose of sugar. It is baked and used for puddings. It tastes like liquorice. The crown of long glossy leaves is useful as fodder where cattle exist; but here it is the equivalent of so many yards of green silk, and supplies some pretty damsel with a decent petticoat.

The crimson dracæna is sacred to the dead, and is constantly planted on the graves, and very beautiful is the effect thus produced; while overhead droops the mournful dull green of the *nokonoko*, or casurina-tree, which I can only describe as somewhat resembling the Weymouth pine, and which seems to sigh with every faint breath of wind that stirs its pendent foliage.

Here and there a small plantation of paper mulberry (*Broussonetia*), the bark of which supplies material for native cloth, or a patch of arrowroot, or perhaps a few tall sugar-canes or tufts of

Indian corn, complete the common produce of the native gardens, and combine to produce an effect of rich and varied foliage.

But I must tell you about our picnics. As I before said, they are always water-parties; so we muster several boats and canoes, and start as early as we possibly can to try and profit by the delicious cool of the morning. Our first expedition was to the neighbouring isle of Moturiki, which is Thakombau's own private property, specially reserved from Europeans, so the people see few white faces. There was, however, no staring or mobbing, and we set them down as a very polite race. The moment we landed they brought us fresh cocoa-nuts to drink, and took us to a large native house with wide heavy thatch,—and very grateful was its cool shade after several hours in the glaring sun. Fine mats were spread for us at one end of the house, which is slightly raised for use of "the quality"—an especially fine one, of a peculiar make called *tambu kaisi* (forbidden to commoners), being placed for the white chief; and on this, custom demands that he should sit alone, as it would be contrary to all native manners that even a chief's wife should sit on his mat. Not that wives or women-folk are looked upon in Fiji as inferior animals: quite the contrary; their position is very good, and their influence acknowledged.

Sir Arthur considers that a punctilious observance of the principal points in native etiquette is a means to secure respect and gain influence with the people who now hail him as their highest chief, so, amongst other ceremonies that have to be observed, is the invariable brewing of yangona (which you have heard spoken of in other groups as the *kava*). This, from a purely artistic point of view, is a very attractive scene, so I will describe it to you minutely. Picture to yourself the deep shade of the house, its brown smoke-thatched rafters and dark thatch-roof, with a film of blue smoke rising from the fireplace at the far end, which is simply a square in the floor edged with stones, round which, on mats, lie the boatmen, and a group of natives with flowers coquettishly stuck in their hair, and very slight drapery of native cloth, and fringes of bright croton-leaves. A great wooden bowl, with four legs, is then brought in. It is beautifully polished from long use, and has a purple bloom like that on a grape. A rope is fastened to it, and the end of this is thrown towards the chief. The yangona-root is then brought in, scraped and cleaned, cut up into small pieces, and distributed to a select circle of young men to chew. The operation is not *quite* so nasty as might be supposed, as they repeatedly rinse their mouths with fresh water during the process, which occupies

some time; while all the company sit round most solemnly, and some sing quaint *mékés* (*i.e.*, choruses), very wild and characteristic. They are so old that many of them are incomprehensible even to the singers, who merely repeat the words in an unknown tongue, as they learnt them from their parents.

When the chewing process is complete, each man produces a lump of finely chewed white fibre. This is then deposited in a large wooden bowl, and one of the number is told off to pour water on the yangona, and wring it out through a piece of hybiscus fibre, which is like a piece of fine netting. A turbid yellowish fluid is thus produced, in taste resembling rhubarb and magnesia, flavoured with sal-volatile. It is handed round in cups made of the shell of large cocoa-nuts, the chief being the first to drink, while all the onlookers join in a very peculiar measured hand-clapping. When he is finished, they shout some exclamation in chorus, and clap hands in a different manner. Then all the others drink in regular order of precedence.

Though no one pretends to like the taste of yangona, its after-effects are said to be so pleasantly stimulating that a considerable number of white men drink it habitually, and even insist on having it prepared by chewing, which is a custom imported from Tonga, and one which has never been adopted in the interior of Fiji, where the old manner of grating the root is preferred. It certainly sounds less nasty, but *connoisseurs* declare with one voice that grated yangona is not comparable to that which has been chewed![1] The gentlemen all say that, sometimes when they have had a very long day of hard walking, they are thankful to the native who brings them this, the only stimulant which he has to offer, and that its effect is like sal-volatile. Confirmed drinkers acquire a craving for it. Its action is peculiar, inasmuch as drunkenness from this cause does not affect the brain, but paralyses the muscles, so that a man lies helpless on the ground, perfectly aware of all that is going on. This is a condition not unknown to the British sailor in Fiji.

This was the first time we had witnessed the scene, so of course we were exceedingly interested. Afterwards I had a long walk through the bush with Sir Arthur, Mr Maudslay, and Mr Le Hunte, Lady Gordon and Mrs Havelock preferring to rest. We

[1] This statement was repeated so often, that at last Dr Macgregor, curious to discover a cause for so strange a fact, took the trouble to weigh six ounces of the root, which he gave to be chewed in the usual manner. When deposited in the bowl he weighed it again, and found it had increased to seventeen ounces! The inference is obvious, and needs no comment. After this discovery the drinking of yangona (*Piper methisticum*) fell greatly out of favour with the gentlemen of our party, and was principally reserved for ceremonial occasions.

had a grand scramble through rich vegetation, and we rested awhile in a quiet old graveyard partly overgrown with tall grasses, the graves all edged with the black stems of the tree-fern; and on many there is a low, red-leafed plant; on others, the tall red dracæna, with which the Fijians love to adorn the resting-place of their dead, as cypress or willow mark God's acre in Old England. From this calm spot we overlooked the blue Pacific, dotted with many isles, chief of which is the clear-cut mountain outline of Viti Levu, the great isle, which I hope to visit ere long. How beautiful they all looked in the golden sunset light, as we rowed and sailed back to Nasova!

Our next picnic was to the romantic Levoni valley at the back of this island. We sailed past Moturiki and two smaller isles, and then rowed two miles up a cool pleasant river with deep green shade till we reached a landing-place, whence we walked a short distance to the clean, tidy little native town of Baretta. Mr Maudslay and Baron von Hügel walked all the way across the mountains, a tough day's work. I walked up the valley with Sir Arthur and Colonel Pratt, but stopped half-way to sketch the splendid tree-ferns. We hurried back, intending to start at four o'clock to catch the tide, but found all the children of both the Roman Catholic and Wesleyan schools assembled in separate flocks. They looked very nice with their pretty necklaces and fringes of flowers and bright leaves worn over the little kilt of native cloth, and across the chest. Each party performed a small *méké*, and did a little reading and writing, although Captain Knollys, as admiral of our fleet, deemed the delay highly imprudent, for the tide was falling fast. As it was, we had to walk some distance through mangrove-swamp and tall reeds, and it was 6 P.M. (the invariable hour of sunset) ere we embarked. So we had to row home in the dark, in danger from many coral patches, but reached Nasova safely at 9 P.M., the children pretty well tired out.

Last Tuesday our picnic was at a pretty sandy bay, shaded by large trees, seven miles along the coast in the opposite direction; but Sir Arthur and Mr Gordon were both unwell, and could not come, and Sir William Hackett also failed. On our way back we landed at Waitova, where the native police have their headquarters —a pretty, shady place, with a pleasant stream, the upper pools of which were Commodore Goodenough's favourite bathing-place.

Captain Olive lives there with his men, in a regular native house, and sleeps on a pile of about twenty fine Fijian mats. He has no chair, and no furniture. His glass and crockery at present consist

of one cup and one tumbler. He feeds native-fashion, having his food brought to him on plaited trays and banana-leaves, the only remarkable object in the house being a large yangona-bowl. We went down to spend an afternoon there one day, and he fed us with sweet native puddings and pine-apples.

When we landed there on Tuesday there was a large gathering of Fijians, playing at throwing spears, and a game called *tinqua*—which consists in throwing reeds, with oval wooden heads, called *toa*, that skim along the ground for 100 or 150 yards—and other sports. They were all adorned with the usual festal garlands and green leaves; their faces painted, some of a rich black, which is truly hideous, though I do not consider scarlet or blue to be much better. One man was painted all over spots like a leopard; some wore white cloth *sulus* as full as an opera-dancer's skirt; others wore little but the fringe of long black water-weed, with a great bunch of white *tappa*, *en panier*. The Vuni Valu's daughter, Andi Arietta Kuilla (Lady Harriet Flag), was looking on. She is a huge, good-natured-looking woman; very clever, I am told.

There was quite a stir in Levuka last Monday in honour of Miss Cudlip's marriage to Mr Tucker. The bride's family being very popular in the isles, a large number of the planters came to it, and they had a merry dance. The young couple started for their home on the big isle, three days' journey in an open boat, *hoping*, if wind and tide prove favourable, to be able to touch at a friend's house each night. No nice yacht-cabins here. I wonder how you would like such a life!

Now little Rachel has come to carry me off to tea, so I must say good-bye.—Ever lovingly yours.

CHAPTER VI.

FIJIAN SPELLING—THE FUTURE CAPITAL—A PLANTER'S LIFE—FOREIGN LABOUR—QUAINT POSTAGE-STAMPS.

LEVUKA, *November* 1, 1875.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—We are settling down into the quietest of lives, and I have no special news to give you; but the day is so lovely that I could not stay in the house, so I wandered up the hill

to a huge boulder of grey rock, fringed with the loveliest ferns, on which I am now sitting, looking across the bluest of seas to the great isle of Viti Levu, whose mountains lie dreamily on the horizon. I must tell you that Viti Levu simply means Great Viti, which is the name by which these islands are always called by their own inhabitants, the name of Fiji, which we have adopted, being simply the Tongan mispronunciation of the word. If you look at a map of the group, you will see that this isle of Ovalau, though important by reason of its being the site of Levuka, the white men's capital, is only a small isle lying off Viti Levu, as does also the tiny isle of Bau, on which is King Thakombau's own particular capital.

Owing to the peculiarity of orthodox Fijian spelling, you must pronounce an *m* before the *b*—so that town is called MBau. Moreover, the sound of *th* is represented by the letter *c*, so that I ought to spell Thakombau, Cacobau; and Thòlo, which is mountain, should be Colo. Moreover, you must always sound the letter *n* before *d*, *g*, and *q*. Now, isn't this puzzling? I think you will admit the wisdom of my spelling Fijian words and names as you are expected to pronounce them. Certainly you could hardly be expected to understand the delicate compliment conveyed to Sir Arthur in the name of a new town which is called after him, Koro-i-aco, *aco* being the equivalent of Arthur.

Speaking of new towns, one of the principal topics of conversation here is the probability of the site of the capital being changed ere long, as Levuka is manifestly unsuited to develop into a town of such importance as it is hoped the capital of this new colony will ere long become. The first whites were thankful to settle here, because of being so near to Bau, and to friendly chiefs, and so it answered their purpose very well; but it is a place where there is no room for extension, and what land there is, is all in private hands; and the 180 houses, such as they are, look as if they had been accidentally dropped all over the small available space. They are all temporary buildings, either reed houses with thatched roofs, or wooden houses roofed with shingles or corrugated zinc,—most of them are just poor little cottages. The best wooden house will not stand this climate for more than eight or ten years, and then involves ceaseless repairs, so everything about the place looks poor and "disjaskit," as the old wives in Scotland would say.

Then the situation is in every respect bad. There is no stone suitable for building. The high hills of Ovalau attract the rain, and the temperature is higher than on other isles, never lower than 70°, and rising to 90°. The town faces the east, so that from early

dawn the full heat of the sun beats on the hard cliffs of dark conglomerate rocks, which rise abruptly close round the little strip of land—in all not thirty acres—on which Levuka is built, and which is only from five to eight feet above the ordinary high-water mark. A considerable portion of this is devoted to swampy *taro*-fields; and drainage on any system is impossible, because a drain would simply find the water-level. Naturally, the place is not very healthy, and various other sites are proposed. Each of these is said to have a multitude of advantages, all of which will have to be officially reported upon.

Nandi is recommended as having an admirable climate, several fine rivers, good stone for building, and as being a good riding country, and suitable for rearing cattle. But the chances seem in favour of Suva on Viti Levu, which also has good building stone, and a thermometer down to 72° occasionally. It is said to be the best harbour of refuge and port of call in the group, with abundant good anchorage for many vessels, and invariably smooth water—a place where hurricane waves are unknown, and which is a central position, and therefore suitable for all purposes. We are going to see this paradise before long, so you will hear all about it.

Meanwhile the chance of any change is naturally most distasteful to the people who have settled here, for poor as the houses are, still they are homes, and any move would involve expenses which few could possibly afford. I had no conception till I came here that any whole community could be so poor. Before we arrived we heard much about the iniquities of the white population, and I have no doubt that there were many who were originally attracted here by the freedom from all restraint of any civilised government, and to whom the anarchy of the law was anything but a drawback. But those days are now a tale of the past, and what we do find are apparently good, well-intentioned people, struggling to keep up a respectable appearance, but utterly crushed by poverty. Many have battled for years in exile, enduring sore hardship and privation of every sort.

Nothing can well be imagined harder than the present position of the planting community in these isles. Many of them, gentlemen by birth and education, came here long years ago and sank what money they possessed in purchase of land and the necessary outlay thereon. Or, still oftener, they started with the terrible drawback of having to borrow money at high interest—a yoke which, once assumed, could rarely be shaken off. Then followed long, lonely years of hard toil, too often resulting only in bitter

disappointment from failing crops or devastating hurricanes, which in a few hours swept away the fruits of months of toil. Even when these disasters have not occurred, low prices and enormous expenses of freight to the colonies, as they call Australia or New Zealand, of storage there, and finally of transit to England, have reduced profits to a mere cipher. And thus it is that, utterly ruined and overwhelmed with debt, with health shattered by privation, and lack of what we deem positive necessaries of life, a very large proportion of the planters are left stranded,—literally without the means to get away, helpless, and wellnigh hopeless,—living just like the natives, on yams and wild pig, knowing no greater luxury than a bowl of yangona, and unable from sheer poverty to obtain the commonest comforts of civilised life. There are many houses in which beef and mutton, rice, barley, or flour, wine or spirits, even tea or coffee and sugar, are wellnigh forgotten luxuries.

I am told that on the occasion of Sir Arthur's arrival, when about two hundred of these gentlemen assembled at Levuka to meet him, many were compelled to absent themselves from sheer inability to face such small expenses as were involved by the journey and hotel quarters. Others could only meet it by bringing with them supplies of poultry and vegetables for sale in Levuka. Many are unable, from sheer poverty, to hire a sufficient number of labourers to work the estates, which at present they cannot sell, —all land-titles being so insecure, that until they have been formally examined and acknowledged by the British Government (Lands Commission), no capitalist would dream of investing in what might prove so worthless a speculation; and though the Lands Commission are doing their utmost to push on their work, it is a slow and difficult task, involving endless patient inquiry, and weighing of conflicting evidence.

So, at the present moment, these people actually are worse off than they were before annexation—a sad discovery for men who had looked on that event as a magic spell which would at once disentangle this disordered skein. And they are now more downhearted that ever.

Once their land-titles are proved, and they can sell their estates to new-comers with full purses and fresh energy, times will doubtless improve, and it will be shown what these isles are really worth. As yet the golden age cannot be said to have dawned, and the resources of the country are still unknown. The cotton trade, which for a while was so flourishing, has for the present utterly failed, the silky sort grown here having lost favour with manu-

facturers. Coffee, sugar, and tobacco are all undeveloped. At present the principal articles of trade in the isles are a preparation of dried cocoa-nut known as *coppra*, from which oil is afterwards extracted, and the Bêches-de-mer, a species of hideous, large, black sea-slug, which, when dried, resemble lumps of india-rubber, and from which the Chinese make a rich soup, said to be equal in flavour to that produced from the far-famed gelatinous birds' nests. This, and the pearly shell of a huge oyster, being natural products, afford occupation to many who have failed in more settled work. Consequently a large proportion of the white men who find life in Fiji so hard a struggle, are more or less directly engaged in the Bêches-de-mer and pearl-shell fisheries; and there are not wanting croakers who foresee a time when this supply will be exhausted.

I believe the only new settlers since annexation are two Chinamen (as usual, always enterprising and cheerful in face of difficulties, and making money where no one else can do so). They have just rented ten acres of land here to start a vegetable garden, so we foresee an abundant supply for the town, and wealth for the deserving gardeners. Strange that no European should have thought of trying this. I do not, however, think that it could ever answer for poor working men to come here — certainly not as simple workers—for, of course, no one would dream of paying wages at European, or still less at colonial, rates, when he can get black labour for so little.

The sum at which "foreign labour" is usually to be had is about £10 for passage-money, and £9 for three years' work. This is generally paid in the form of goods to be taken home to the distant isles, and is one of the points found to require special Government inspection, the quantity and quality of goods supplied to the unsophisticated natives by sundry traders (on receipt of a planter's order for £9 worth of stuff per head) being by no means calculated to give the onlookers a high view of white men's commercial morality. The importation of foreign labour is now entirely in the hands of a Government immigration agent, to whom the owners and captains of all vessels employed in the labour trade are responsible for strict observance of sanitary and other rules, and through whom every master must engage his men and make all payments, and to whom he must return them at the date when their engagement expires, that they may be restored to their own homes at the time agreed on. Of course during the term of service the employer supplies food and tobacco, lodging (such as it is, in most cases), medicine, and a very small amount of raiment.

But the hideous stories of kidnapping and brutal ill-treatment on board ship, or even on plantations, are now happily tales of the past.

The supply of labourers is one of the vexed questions of the present, as each year the labour vessels bring back a smaller number of volunteers from the other groups; and the employment of Fijians on the plantations of white men is in no way encouraged by Government, which recognises as its first duty the care and preservation of these, the true owners of the soil, by whose own invitation, and for whose welfare primarily, England here rules. Considering how invariably dark races have been found to die out before the advance of the white races, the problem of whether this evil cannot be averted in the present instance is one of the deepest interest. It is therefore considered of the utmost importance that the natives should remain in their own villages, subject to their own chiefs, and cultivating their own lands, both for their own benefit and to enable them to contribute their just proportion of the Government taxes, which it has been found desirable to collect in produce from gardens specially cultivated for this purpose by each village. Now that the number of the people has been so appallingly reduced by measles, it is the more desirable that those that survive should not be encouraged to leave their homes. Consequently a comparatively small number of Fijians are in the service of white men, who, as a rule, are not anxious to secure the labour of men from neighbouring villages, but endeavour to engage those from other isles, who thus are virtually as much strangers in a strange land are as the labourers imported from other groups. It is said that only under these circumstances are Fijians found willing to work diligently on the plantations—no great wonder, considering how easily they can supply their own simple needs in their own homes.

It is probable that arrangements will shortly be made for importing a large supply of Hindoo coolies from Calcutta, a measure which does not at present meet with cordial welcome, as of course the cost of transporting them to and fro will add materially to the expenses of the planters who engage them.

Meanwhile, on all large plantations there are representatives of half the Polynesian Isles, each lot living somewhat apart from the others, in separate quarters, and all having distinctive characteristics to be dealt with and considered, their dispositions being as diverse as are their features and complexions. There are Tanna men, with long hair done in a multitude of tiny plaits; straight-

haired Tokalaus from the Line Islands, with sallow skin and large dark eyes; woolly heads and grizzly heads of every variety from the Banks Islands and the Loyalty group, or Erromango.

The men most sought after as really hard workers come from Tanna, in the New Hebrides; while some of their nearest neighbours in the same group prove utterly useless. But the least popular come from the Solomon Isles, these being literally untamable, preserving the instincts of their race, who are all ferocious cannibals and treacherous to a degree. Some even come from Santa Cruz, that name of bitter association, which, twice over—first in 1871, and again last August—has thrilled all the world with horror, when two of the noblest men who ever sailed the southern seas, striving so lovingly to do good everywhere, fell victims to the treacherous arrows of the people they would fain have helped. Of course you know I allude to Bishop Patteson and Commodore Goodenough—names worthy for evermore to be enshrined side by side among the foremost of Christian martyrs.

Just imagine what cheerful work it must be for a planter beginning life in Fiji to watch for the arrival of a vessel freighted with foreign labour, the wildest-looking creatures you can possibly conceive; and then, having engaged a number of these for three years, to start for some remote estate on a distant isle, accompanied by a horde of utterly untutored savages from a dozen different groups, all having different customs and different languages, alike only in their total ignorance of the work required of them, and requiring to be taught everything from the very beginning. Picture to yourself having these for your only companions, and knowing that they are certain to leave you at the expiration of their three years' service, just when you have, by dint of unwearied patience and trouble, succeeded in training them in some measure.

There would be some compensation in such dismal work if it were to result in coining gold, and so securing a speedy return to England, or even the chance of making a really comfortable home out here; but the road to wealth in Fiji seems to be like the approach to heaven, strait and narrow, and few there be that find it.

So you see that the prospect is not altogether inviting; and as regards the present state of the Isles, I should certainly not advise any one to come here at present to settle unless he has a good lump of money to invest in land—say, at least, £2000—and plenty capital to work it. The place is frightfully expensive, and for any one dependent on his pay is simply ruinous. All Government

employés have very low salaries, and find it almost impossible to live; and yet every post is eagerly sought by dozens of white men, craving a morsel of bread.

Of course it is all very delightful for me who have nothing to think about, but just what enjoyment can be got out of the beautiful surroundings, with heaps of pleasant companions, and everything to make life agreeable, including blessed good health, which, I am thankful to say, is my invariable portion. I wish I could say as much for all the others, most of whom have had some twinges of illness; and all have had sore feet, arising, I fancy, from scratching mosquito-bites, which, in this moist climate, frequently results in very painful sores. So most of the party take it by turns to be lame. Mr Gordon suffers horribly from neuralgia, which is much encouraged by the mode of building here, the walls being merely made of reeds, through which the draughts blow freely; and though the air that thus comes in is generally celestial, sometimes a storm blows up before morning, and a cold, wet, rainy wind blows in. Last night we were all awakened by a noise like thunder on the roof, which is of zinc, as with all foreign houses here. It was a mad rain-storm beating right in at the open jalousies. Some people were fairly flooded out. To-day the weather is clear and lovely.

I am still living with the Havelocks, who are kindness itself, and make me heartily welcome to a corner of their sweet little cottage —the nicest situation here. I am most fortunate to be with them, as Nasova (Government House) is still in a horrible mess, full of builders, carpenters, noise—no rest for any one anywhere—besides being much too low for the breeze—actually on the sea-level. I am going off soon to visit another island, Nananu, the property of Mr Leefe's brother. Mrs L. most kindly wrote to invite me, and to say her husband would come in his boat to fetch me. One of the drawbacks to these expeditions is, that you may be becalmed and kept out at sea in a tiny schooner for several days,—which might be awkward, to say the least of it.

We have had alarming rumours of the unsettled state of the disaffected tribes on the Great Island, but later reports make us believe them to have been greatly exaggerated. Sir Arthur intends going there in person, without even a body-guard—only sending a small body of native police beforehand. Now it is growing dark, for it is past six o'clock, at which hour the sun sets all the year round. We regret the long summer evenings, especially when returning from any distant expedition. However, we shall have the gain of no short days in winter. Now I must climb down from

my rocky perch and get home while I can see my way, so good-bye.—Ever yours, C. F. G. C.

Among other peculiarities of this small colony, our postage-stamps would amuse you. They were struck by the Government which crowned Thakombau king, and bear his initials, C. R. (Cacobau Rex). In the present necessity for rigid economy no new stamps are issued, but the letters V.R. partially obliterate the C.R., or rather, blend with them. Another curiosity is the bank-note of the late Government, which wisely eschews any binding "promise to pay," and merely states that "the bearer is entitled to receive" his due, with the *sous entendu*, "Don't he wish he may get it!" The suggestion may prove useful nearer home!

CHAPTER VII.

A CANOE ADVENTURE—SHARKS—FEVER—THE FEAST OF WORMS—RESULTS OF MISSION WORK—NO MEANS OF LOCOMOTION—GOD'S ACRE.

LEVUKA, *November* 16, 1875.

The happiest of happy birthdays to you, my dear Nell. I suppose you are not even awake yet, for you know our time is twelve hours ahead of yours. I wish I could look in on you all and have a long, long talk. Certainly it is a weary expanse of sea that separates us at present. I was within an ace of bringing my journeys to an end last Saturday; and as I don't have many adventures to relate, I may as well tell you about it.

We were going off for one of the Governor's pleasant little picnics along the coast, but somehow one of the boats was not forthcoming, so, as I had always been anxious to go in a native canoe, it was agreed that I should go with Mr Gordon, Mr Maudslay, and Captain Havelock, and four Fijians, in the canoe which carried the luncheon. A canoe is built on the principle of having an outrigger alongside to balance her. When the big mat-sail is up, she runs like the wind; but, of course, every small ripple that breaks over the bow pours into her hold, so that a man has to stand astern bailing incessantly, which he generally does by kicking out the water with his foot. Some of the large canoes

belonging to the chiefs are quite beautiful; but, as luck would have it, the luncheon-boat on this occasion was a very bad one, and unusually small, so that really we perhaps overweighted her. However, what happened was, that, as we were running full speed, a strong puff of wind caught us, twisted the sail, and ran her head under water. Of course she immediately filled, and apparently about thirty seconds might elapse before we foundered. The gentlemen instinctively tightened their girths to be ready for a swim, when happily the presence of mind of the Fijians in jumping overboard, and the sudden righting of the sail, changed the state of affairs, and after a deal of hard bailing our position became somewhat more satisfactory. The men rigged up a humble little sail, with which we sped onward at a much less exciting, but, under the circumstances, a good deal surer rate, and reached our destination in capital time for luncheon.

Our halt this time was under one specially grand old tree close to the shore (white sand and large trees are both sufficiently rare to make them noteworthy on this isle of Ovalau). Of course, in coming home, room was made for me in the big boat, and the gentlemen agreed to walk home—rather a stretch for Mr Gordon, who, as I told you in my last, has had a very sharp attack of fever and neuralgia, and was still rather low when we came out. However, he seemed quite brightened up by the day's exertions, and has now gone off with Mr Carew to the very wildest mountain district in all Fiji, where the cannibal and disaffected tribes live. Baron A. von Hügel went there some time ago to study the natives in their wild state, and try to buy some good specimens of their work. Of course these districts are the place of all others to collect curiosities. I don't mean that this is Mr Gordon's reason for going there. Sir Arthur is going very soon, and it is well to make straight his path.

As concerns the boat incident, you may make your mind quite easy about its not happening again; for all the gentlemen are naturally in mortal fear of swimming in a sea swarming with sharks, and they'll take good care not to incur such a double risk as having to look after me at the same time![1]

[1] That such fears would not be groundless, you may readily infer from the following horrible story reported last year in the 'Levuka Times': "News reaches us from windward of a sad accident which has resulted in the death of upwards of twenty people. It appears that a canoe left Loma Loma with twenty-five natives on board, bound for Totoya. They were going about when a sudden squall sent the sail against the mast, capsizing the canoe. The unfortunate passengers clung to the *cama*, and might have escaped with consequences no worse than those which would have attended discomfort and exposure, but for the horrible fact that the

Since I last wrote to you there has been a good deal of sickness going about of an unusual description; its principal feature being, that while your pulse continues quite steady, your temperature runs up to any extent, and you feel good for nothing. I've had a sharp touch of it myself, enough to pull me up for boasting about never being ill. I was laid up for a fortnight, which you can imagine rather astonished me. Really it was worth a little touch of illness to see how dear and kind every member of the Fijian family could be. You yourself could not have taken more care of me than did Mrs Havelock; and Lady Gordon, to whom walking is such an exertion in this hot climate, came toiling up the hill every day to see me, and sent me the strongest brown soups and port-wine to take at short intervals. Knowing how unattainable such luxuries are to most people on these isles, I marvel how they contrive to shake off similar attacks. Dr Macgregor, too, has proved himself a most kind friend and skilful doctor. He is such a good fellow. He and his wife both hail from Aberdeen, then went to Mauritius, whence Sir Arthur persuaded them to come here. To them, as also to Colonel Pratt, the 'Inverness Couriers' afford unfailing inter st.

I find another centre of north-country sympathy in Mrs Havelock's nurse, a cosy woman who has taken great care of me during my illness. She lived in Scotland for many years, till her husband's regiment was ordered to Seychelles, where Captain Havelock was then acting Governor. She has a vivid recollection of Roualeyn; so has the carpenter who comes to work here. But so it is wherever I find Scotchmen. As to Dr Macgregor, he has known his book[1] by heart since he was ten years old! Now I really have nothing more to tell you. We are near midsummer, and have cold blustering winds and sharp showers. A fine day is quite exceptional. Good-bye. Love to each and all.

Monday, November 22, 1875.

Dearest Bessie,—I suppose Nell told you about my having an attack of fever. I'm all right again now, though not very strong yet. While I remember, I want you to tell the boys about

capsize occurred in a locality infested with sharks These ravenous monsters seized their victims one by one, devouring twenty-three out of the twenty-five unfortunates whose lives were thus placed at their mercy. Of the two who escaped, one is a woman; but her situation is very critical, the whole of the flesh having been taken off one leg. The matter is altogether too dreadful to admit of comment."

[1] A Hunter's Life in South Africa. By Roualeyn Gordon Cumming.

an extraordinary fact in natural history, which is, I believe, peculiar to these islands. It is called "The Balolo Festival"—in other words, The Feast of Worms—and occurred yesterday. The balolo[1] is a small sea-worm, long and thin as ordinary vermicelli. Some are fully a yard long; others about an inch. It has a jointed body and many legs, and lives in the deep sea.

Only on two days in the whole year do these creatures come to the surface of the water. The first day is in October, which is hence called "Little Balolo," when only a few appear. The natives know exactly when they are due, and are all on the look-out for them. They make their calculations by the position of certain stars. After this no more are seen till the high tide of the full moon, which occurs between the 20th and 25th of November, which hence takes the name of "Great Balolo," when they rise to the surface in countless myriads, always before daybreak. In the Samoan Isles the day occurs about a fortnight earlier. At certain well-known points near the reefs, the whole sea, to the depth of several inches, is simply alive with these red, green, and brown creatures, which form one writhing mass, and are pursued by shoals of fish of all sizes, which come to share the feast with the human beings. The latter are in a state of the wildest excitement, for it is the merriest day of the year, and is looked forward to from one November to the next by all the young folk.

About midnight they go out in their canoes, and anxiously await the appearance of the first few worms, and great is the struggle to secure these, which herald the approach of untold myriads. For several hours there is the merriest sport and laughter, every one bailing up the worms and trying who can most quickly fill his canoe, either by fair sport or by stealing from his neighbour. All is noise, scrambling, and excitement, the lads and lasses each carrying wicker-baskets with which they capture the worms without carrying too much salt water on board. As the day dawns, these mysterious creatures with one accord sink once more to their native depths, and by the moment of sunrise not one remains on the surface; nor will another be seen for a twelvemonth, when, true to its festival, the balolo will certainly return. Never has it been known to fail, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, white or brown. Nor is there any record of any one having seen one rise to the surface on any save the two appointed days, which are known as the "Little Balolo" and "Great Balolo."

Well do the natives know how needless it would be to look for

[1] *Palolo viridis.*

one after sunrise, so all the canoes then return to land, wrap their balolo in bread-fruit leaves, cook them in ovens dug on the beach, and have a great feast—a regular whitebait dinner, in fact. So now you know the true meaning of the "Diet of Worms." So great is the quantity taken, that the supply generally lasts for several days, being warmed up when required; and basketfuls are sent to friends at a distance, just as we in Scotland send a box of grouse. Such is our prejudice against all manner of worms, that few Europeans appreciate this dainty, which nevertheless is really not nasty, especially when eaten like potted meat, with bread and butter. It is rather like spinage, with a flavour of the sea,—perhaps I should compare it with the laver of the Scilly Isles. Captain Olive brought us some to taste, which had been given him by some of the Roman Catholic soldiers.

Sad to say, both this year and last year the full moon tide occurred on Sunday morning, notwithstanding which, the irreligious little worms rose to the surface with their wonted punctuality. So rigid is the obedience of all the Wesleyans in the matter of Sabbatical observance, that not one of their canoes went out; whereas their Roman Catholic brethren, to whom more laxity is allowed, went forth rejoicing. The latter, however, are a very small minority, and you can imagine what an act of self-denial it must be to give up this highly-valued harvest of the sea on two following years. So rigid is the adherence to the letter of the old Sabbatical law throughout the group, that not a canoe will put to sea except to carry a teacher to a place of worship; nor will a native climb a tree to fetch a cocoa-nut, even when bribed with much coveted silver; in fact, the offer of silver is considered as a Satanic temptation to trade on *Singha tamlu*, the holy day. Of course, to us this seems an overstraining of obedience, but then these people are still like children, for whom a strictly defined law has many advantages; and, moreover, many of them are still in the fervour of their first faith, and they certainly are the most devout race (*for Christians*) that I have ever seen.

Strange indeed is the change that has come over these isles since first Messrs Cargill and Cross, Wesleyan missionaries, landed here, in the year 1835, resolved at the hazard of their lives to bring the light of Christianity to these ferocious cannibals. Imagine the faith and courage of the two white men, without any visible protection, landing in the midst of these bloodthirsty hordes, whose unknown language they had in the first instance to master; and day after day witnessing such scenes as chill one's blood even to

hear about. Many such have been described to me by eye-witnesses.

Slow and disheartening was their labour for many years, yet so well has that little leaven worked, that, with the exception of the Kai Tholos, the wild highlanders, who still hold out in their mountain fastnesses, the eighty inhabited isles have all abjured cannibalism and other frightful customs, and have *lotued* (*i.e.*, embraced Christianity) in such good earnest as may well put to shame many more civilised nations.

I often wish that some of the cavillers who are for ever sneering at Christian missions could see something of their results in these isles. But first they would have to recall the Fiji of ten years ago, when every man's hand was against his neighbour, and the land had no rest from barbarous intertribal wars, in which the foe, without respect of age or sex, were looked upon only in the light of so much beef; the prisoners deliberately fattened for the slaughter; dead bodies dug up that had been buried ten or twelve days, and could only be cooked in the form of puddings; limbs cut off from living men and women, and cooked and eaten in presence of the victim, who had previously been compelled to dig the oven, and cut the firewood for the purpose; and this not only in time of war, when such atrocity might be deemed less inexcusable, but in time of peace, to gratify the caprice or appetite of the moment.

Think of the sick buried alive; the array of widows who were deliberately strangled on the death of any great man; the living victims who were buried beside every post of a chief's new house, and must needs stand clasping it, while the earth was gradually heaped over their devoted heads; or those who were bound hand and foot, and laid on the ground to act as rollers, when a chief launched a new canoe, and thus doomed to a death of excruciating agony;—a time when there was not the slightest security for life or property, and no man knew how quickly his own hour of doom might come; when whole villages were depopulated simply to supply their neighbours with fresh meat!

Just think of all this, and of the change that has been wrought, and then just imagine white men who can sneer at missionary work in the way they do. Now you may pass from isle to isle, certain everywhere to find the same cordial reception by kindly men and women. Every village on the eighty inhabited isles has built for itself a tidy church, and a good house for its teacher or native minister, for whom the village also provides food and clothing

Can you realise that there are nine hundred Wesleyan churches in Fiji, at every one of which the frequent services are crowded by devout congregations; that the schools are well attended; and that the first sound which greets your ear at dawn, and the last at night, is that of hymn-singing and most fervent worship, rising from each dwelling at the hour of family prayer?

What these people may become after much contact with the common run of white men, we cannot, of course, tell, though we may unhappily guess. At present they are a body of simple and devout Christians, full of deepest reverence for their teachers and the message they bring, and only anxious to yield all obedience.

Of course there are a number of white men here, as in other countries, who (themselves not caring one straw about any religion) declare that Christianity in these isles is merely nominal, adopted as a matter of expediency, and that half the people are still heathen at heart. Even were this true (and all outward signs go to disprove it), I wonder what such cavillers expect! I wonder if they know by what gradual steps our own British ancestors yielded to the Light, and for how many centuries idolatrous customs continued to prevail in our own isles! Yet here all traces of idolatry are utterly swept away.

I wonder, too, if they ever remember that out of the four million inhabitants of London, one million are not recognised as even nominal members of any Christian sect; that of that million an exceedingly small number have, even once or twice in their lives, entered any place of worship; and of the remainder, I think, the largest charity could scarcely recognise many by any mark of special uprightness or devotion! It would be strange indeed, therefore, if these new converts had suddenly acquired a monopoly of Christian virtues.

It is painfully suggestive to know that the thing chiefly deprecated by all who have the welfare of the people at heart, is their acquiring English, or being thrown in the way of foreigners.

I hope you won't think this a very long-winded letter. It is the last I shall write to you from Mrs Havelock's pleasant little home, for the workmen have been getting on with the new house at Nasova, and to-day I am going to rejoin Lady Gordon there. Of course we have been meeting almost every day, as this house is on a small hill close by. In fact, this is the better situation of the two, being on a headland which catches every breeze; whereas Nasova is too much sheltered, and actually on the sea-level. There are only a dozen steps from the dining-room to the pier, from which, by the

way, the gentlemen bathe every morning, in utter defiance of the sharks, which have been seen quite close to them. It certainly is risky.

NASOVA, *November* 30, 1875.

MY DEAREST NELL,—Immense excitement prevailed here last night, the Colonial Secretary coming down to rouse up the Governor and staff, just as they had got comfortably to bed after a grand Levuka ball, to announce that, after all our doubts and fears, a large steamer has come with mails from San Francisco. We fear she has only come once in a way, not knowing the cruel decision of the New Zealand Government not to call here. Anyhow she will take our letters this time, so I may as well begin one, especially as it may be some time before I write again; for, two days hence, I am going with the Governor, Lady Gordon, Mr Maudslay, and the children, in the new little Government steamer to Suva, on Viti Levu[1] (Great Fiji). There is a good deal of work going on here, such as pulling down of old native huts, and levelling of earth, and painting the new house; and Dr Macgregor wants to get rid of us all till it is finished, so Sir Arthur has taken the so-called hotel, an empty house, at Suva, the proposed site of the new capital. It will be very good for the children to have change of air. When they are snugly settled we are to go on to the Rewa, a very fertile district. If we have such lovely weather as this last week has been, it will be pleasant. But last night it poured, and looks as if it meant to do so again, which would spoil everything.

From Rewa I am going on a grand expedition with the Langhams. Mr L. is the head of the Wesleyan Mission here. He and his wife travelled with us from Sydney, and we made great friends, and now they have asked me to go with them on a three weeks' cruise up the Rewa river. We shall sleep every night in Fijian houses—large reed-huts—so we shall travel really in correct style, and yet quite comfortably. It is a great thing for me to have this chance, as none of our own set (Lady Gordon, Lady Halkett, Mrs de Ricci, Mrs Havelock, or Mrs Macgregor) ever care to leave their own roofs.

Since I last wrote I have moved down from Mrs Havelock's house to Nasova, where the new house is so far on that the children are sleeping in the large new drawing-room, and I am in possession of their nursery. But my own room is now quite

[1] Viti Levu—pronounce Veetee Layvoo.

ready; and I was busy yesterday, with the help of an acute darkie (Hindoo), in making it all cosy, putting up shelves, and hooks, and brackets, and pictures; and by the time I come back the garden in front of the windows will be quite in order and full of flowers. They do grow well here when any one takes any trouble; and Sir Arthur's head man, Abbey, is possessed of an unbounded energy, which delights in organising everything. He works himself, and struggles to make a troop of idle careless Fijians do likewise, so garden, farm, and everything else are taking shape. He goes with us to Suva. Captain Knollys remains here in charge of everything, and to try to get the work done. He has command of a large body of Fijian police, or soldiers, who are always on guard here—picturesque people—who keep the place alive, and are to us a source of endless interest and amusement. There are also a lot of Engineers living in a native house on the green in front, so there is no lack of human beings about the place.

Two days ago a large German man-of-war came in, the Gazelle: her band came and played here, and the Levuka world came to listen. Last night the German residents gave them a ball; but our distance from the scene of action (a long mile of vile footpath, and no alternative but walking) franks us ladies from appearing at any of these festivities.[1] There is literally no means of being carried, such as we are accustomed to find in all Eastern lands. Palanquins, sedan-chairs, dandies, kangos, and all such substitutes for carriages, are alike unknown, and if imported, it would be impossible to induce men to carry them (at least so we are told). So there is nothing for it but to tramp, either in the fierce sun, or, if after sunset, carrying lanterns to enable us to avoid the many snares and pitfalls of the great highroad. Some of the officers of the Gazelle lunched here yesterday, and some more dine to-night. They talk very good English.

The only other events of the week have been two very sad deaths. One was that of the contractor for part of this house, a young man, only married three months ago; the other, a fine boy of twelve, who climbed a *kevecka*-tree, overhanging a rocky burn, to get bunches of red blossoms, and, alas! fell off on to the cruel boulders, fracturing his leg and arm, and doing internal injury besides. For a week they thought he might live, but the lockjaw set in, as it commonly does in these climates, from very slight

[1] Before we left the isle, Captain Knollys succeeded in drilling a set of men to carry Lady Gordon in a wicker-chair; and on the occasion of certain special festivities in the town a second chair was rigged up for me. So probably future residents will have chairs and bearers, as a matter of course.

wounds (as in the cases of Bishop Patteson and Commodore Goodenough, and their men), and the poor fellow died. He is one of a large family; they are in dire grief, as you can fancy. His little brother was in the tree with him, and says he almost fainted with terror when he saw his brother fall, and can't think how he got down himself. It made us all think of 'Misunderstood'! The cemetery lies on a pleasant hill, one mile further along the shore, so we saw both funerals go past. The poor carpenter's coffin was rowed in a boat, his friends following by the shore. But the boy's funeral, which was a Roman Catholic one, was more ceremonial, and followed by a great number of children carrying flowers. I think the poor little brothers and sisters go to the grave almost daily.

I don't think there's anything else to tell you, and I must get on with my preparations for the trip. I have got your photograph in the white frame, just in front of me, with such a lovely red rose and gardenia, and bit of stag's-horn moss, beside it.

CHAPTER VIII.

LIFE ON VITI LEVU—SUVA—A FLORAL CLOCK—THE REWA RIVER—OBSOLETE CUSTOMS—FIRST NIGHT IN A NATIVE HOUSE.

SUVA, IN VITI LEVU (GREAT FIJI),
December 10th.

DEAR EISA,—I find there is a chance of a mail to England, so, though I am dead beat, I send just a line to say I am flourishing and in lovely scenery, with many kind folk. Perhaps by the time this reaches you, you will have seen my last to Nelly, written just as we started on this cruise. The children wanted change, so Sir Arthur rented this big house, which was formerly a hotel, and brought us all here in the Government steamer. The house would all go into one average room at home, but by means of partitions half-way to the ceiling, the upper floor is divided into a sitting-room and six stalls for sleeping in. Of course it is practically all one room.

There is only one other house here, the home of Mr Joski, a sugar-planter. His family are very kind, and do all in their power to make us comfortable. There is a large sugar-mill here,

and the near hills are covered with cane; but this is, unfortunately, one of the districts where sugar has failed, and the planters are hopelessly ruined. It is so sad to see the deserted sugar-mill, and the fields of cane that are not considered worth cutting. It was absurd folly ever to plant cane at this place, the soil being scanty and utterly unsuitable. But this is one of the sites which runs the best chance of being chosen as the new capital (of the pauper colony), in which case the landowners will some day be rich.

This harbour is simply lovely. From the flat (which is the site of the town in the air) we look across to hills in form like those of Torridon in Ross-shire, but covered with densest tropical vegetation, and watered by many rivers, each lovelier than the last. There are four of these quite near together, and every afternoon we explore one or other in the Governor's charming boat, rowed by half-a-dozen brown beings with great fuzzy heads, and wearing a becoming dress of white, trimmed with crimson.

This morning I had a good walk in the early morning to get a sketch from a lovely site. Then after breakfast we rowed up one of the rivers, and lunched on a grassy bank under a shady citron-tree, as far up as we could take the boat. The vegetation was too exquisite. We found several orchids new to us, and a lovely pink-and-white wax-like creeper. I never saw such wealth of ferns of every sort and kind, specially hundreds of tall tree-ferns, with stems about thirty feet, and masses of one like a gigantic Osmunda. I never can find seeds of the grandest, but I send you such as I have.

We had an amusing expedition yesterday. I started early with Miss Joski, and our route lay along the top of the ridge, tall reeds far over our heads. Before we were aware of its approach, a tropical shower came on, and we were drenched (of course my dear shiny waterproof kept me dry, but my companion was soaked), so we made for a house where a good old Irish couple lived, with a troop of babies. They were just getting up. But in we marched, and prayed for dry clothes; and the good woman clothed Miss Joski from head to foot, and supplied me with dry stockings and boots. Then we joined our picnic breakfast to theirs. They insisted on killing a chicken in our honour; and our mutton sandwiches were a rare prize in a district where butcher-meat is unattainable. By this time the day was glorious, and we sketched till afternoon.

Such a view, and such a flight of stairs down to the sea—a quarter of a mile, and almost perpendicular!

To-morrow early we all start for the Rewa, another district, where there is a great native gathering to meet the Governor. Half of the charm of wandering in these mountains is the knowledge that two years ago we should certainly have been eaten!

An express arrived yesterday from Levuka with English mails, and brought me a letter from Janie. Tell her I nearly lost my rings last Monday. We had been lunching up the inner harbour; the gentlemen had all gone off expeditionising, and Lady Gordon and I were sitting by the river with only Jack and Nevil, when a native woman came and crouched beside us. We gave her cakes and biscuits to encourage her, as we could not exchange words. Then she pointed admiringly to our rings, wishing to try them on; so I put mine on her hand, little dreaming that Fiji custom sanctions asking for anything you happen to fancy, and that it is an unheard-of breach of manners not to give it. So a moment later I looked up from my drawing just in time to see the proud woman disappearing in the bush with her prize! Of course I rescued my treasures, but fear she will think we were very ill bred!

On Sunday we walked along the shore, and then by a path through the abandoned sugar-fields, till we came to the little native church, where, much to our amusement, the teacher told us that he regulates the hour of service by the opening of a Bauhinia blossom. He has no clock, but when the flower opens he beats the wooden *lali*, or drum, and then the people assemble. We watched this floral timepiece expand its blossoms to the early light; and then the congregation came trooping in to a quiet, earnest service, with singing, prayer, and preaching — all very devout. Of course the words spoken were to me only a sound, but rich and musical, full of vowels, and very like Italian. There is a great charm in such a scene; and as we sat on the mats during the sermon, it was pleasant to look out from the cool shade of the church, through the many open doors, to the calm blue sea and sky, seen through a frame of golden-green sugar-canes, the leaves just rustling in the faint breeze. Now I must stop; so good-bye.

NAVOUNINDRALA,[1] ON THE REWA
Monday, 13th Dec.

DEAREST EISA,—In my last letters home I mentioned that we were just starting for Rewa, where there is a great meeting of chiefs

[1] *I.e.*, the root of the *drala*-tree.

to welcome Sir Arthur and Lady Gordon, and it was arranged that I was then to join the Langhams on a voyage far up the river, where they are going to visit several new mission stations, among tribes who only a few months ago determined to become Christian, and requested that teachers might be sent to them. Native teachers were accordingly sent, and it is partly to judge of their progress that this expedition was planned.

Starting from Suva in a head wind, about six hours' hard rowing brought us to the Rewa, which is certainly a very fine river—the largest of the main island, Viti Levu, and navigable for fifty miles. It receives the waters of various mountain-streams (navigable only by canoes), and itself becomes so large a body of water, that, ere reaching the town of Rewa, its width is about equal to that of the Thames at London Bridge. Here it divides into a network of streams, and enters the sea by many mouths, all bordered with the monotonous green of the mangrove, which overspreads the dreary swamp with its extraordinary and intricate network of roots. We passed through some miles of this strange mangrove country, starting an innumerable number of wild duck, and at last reached Rewa,[1] which is a large village of the invariable thatched houses. Here we found a great gathering of the people to receive

[1] It was at this town that Jackson (an Englishman, who, thirty years ago, was detained among these people for two years) witnessed an incident of peculiar interest, as an illustration of sacrifice to the Earth spirits,—a custom which British antiquarians tell us was formerly practised by our own pagan ancestors, and of which traces have till very recently lingered among us. A new house was about to be built for the chief, Tui Drekete, and the people assembled from all tributary villages to bring their offerings, and dance and make merry. A series of large holes were dug, to receive the main posts of the house; and as soon as these were reared, a number of wretched men were led to the spot, and one was compelled to descend into each hole, and therein stand upright, with his arms clasped round it. The earth was then filled in, and the miserable victims were thus buried alive, deriving what comfort they might from the belief that the task thus assigned to them was one of much honour, as insuring stability to the chief's house. The same idea prevailed with respect to launching a chief's canoe, when the bodies of living men were substituted for ordinary rollers—a scene which Jackson also witnessed, and quotes to prove how cruelly the tributary tribes were treated by these Rewa chiefs, one of whom he accompanied to a neighbouring isle. They came to a place called Na ara Bale (meaning "to drag over," literally corresponding to our own Tarbert), a low, narrow isthmus, joining two islands together. By dragging the canoes across this half-mile of dry land, they were saved a long row round the island. On landing, they found the villagers entertaining the people of another village which had fallen under the displeasure of Rewa, and at the bidding of the chief these people allowed their guests to be surprised in the night, when forty were captured; and each being bound hand and foot to the stems of banana-trees, were then laid as rollers, face uppermost, along the path by which the canoes were to be dragged across the isthmus. The shrieks of the victims were drowned by the hauling songs of their captors, and, with one exception, all were crushed to death. One poor wretch lingered awhile in torture till the ovens were made ready, in which all were cooked, the guests of the previous day affording the feast for this.

the Governor, on his first visit to this town; and as his boat approached, the river-banks were thronged with native chiefs and their followers, all squatting on the ground, in the correct attitude of respect—for Fijian etiquette prohibits an inferior from standing in presence of a superior, as strictly as it forbids him passing behind him.

So great a concourse of people had rarely, if ever, been seen at Rewa: it was calculated that nearly 5000 were present, a number the more remarkable as the ravages of the measles last spring were peculiarly felt in this district, where it is computed that 8000 perished, including no less than ninety teachers, all carefully trained men,—a loss which cannot easily be replaced.

Great were the preparations for the native festivities on the morrow, and you can imagine my dismay on learning that, owing to the irregularity of posts, and the day for this ceremony having been repeatedly deferred, Mr Langham had made all his arrangements for starting from Rewa that very day. And, in truth, we had not landed five minutes, when the mission boat arrived from Bau. Complicated arrangements had been made for teachers and people to come from distant points and meet us at different villages on each day of the week, so that delay was impossible. Consequently I was obliged to give up one thing or the other, which was intensely aggravating; but, on weighing both, the expedition into the interior was voted the more important; and so, with many regrets, I turned away from Rewa and its picturesque crowds, merely halting long enough to get some tea from Mrs Webb at the ever-hospitable Wesleyan mission station. Then we embarked in the large mission boat,—Mr and Mrs Langham and myself, rowed by half-a-dozen stalwart young students from the training institution at Bau.

We had to row six miles up the river against wind and tide, and we were all very weary, especially the student boatmen, who had rowed nearly all the way from Bau, and whose time grew slower and slower, till I counted twelve seconds between each stroke. The sun was setting when we started, and shed a golden glow over the low flat shores of the river, where we hailed the sight of many cattle, pastured in real grassy meadows,—the first we have seen in Fiji. The soil here is richly alluvial, and from fourteen to fifteen feet in depth. It is expected to yield large returns to sugar-planters.

Happily we had a glorious full moon, which made night clear as day; but it was past ten ere we reached Navousi, the house of

Andi Kuilla, Thakombau's favourite daughter, who was absent, and her people did not expect us till two days later; so her house was shut up, and there was some delay before a fire was lighted, water brought, tea made, and supper eaten, and our mosquito-nets hung up, and then family prayers in Fijian. So it was 12.30 before we turned in. It was my first night in a native house, which consists only of one large room for everybody. In a very fine chief's house, such as this, large curtains of native cloth are hung up at night to divide the upper end into several snug compartments. There is no furniture whatever; and a pile of soft mats is the only bedding required. A Fijian pillow consists of a bamboo, or a bar of wood, standing on two wooden legs, six inches high, which supports the neck only (very much like the pillows of the Kaffirs, and on the same principle as those of Japan). Here it was invented to avoid spoiling the elaborately dressed hair, which formerly was a most important consideration. We, being given to luxury, each carry a soft pillow for our weary heads, and very fine nets to shield us from the attacks, not only of mosquitoes, but of a vicious, virulent, though scarcely visible, sand-fly, which infests the mangrove swamp and many parts of the river. We also carry sheets and a blanket in case of cold nights, and pieces, three yards long, of strong American cloth, to keep our bedding dry; also plaids, which we can hang up to build ourselves tiny rooms within the great public room, where all the boatmen, and sometimes many other people, will sleep.

I was sorry that Andi Arietta Kuilla was not at home; I have met her at Nasova, and also seen her fishing with her maidens of noble birth, all clad in the lightest raiment, consisting chiefly of daintily woven garlands—for fishing, you must know, means bathing, and fun and frolic, in the warm bright sea. But here at Navousi she is the dignified widow of a very high chief of this district, which she rules with masculine vigour and wisdom.

At daybreak we again embarked and proceeded up the river, frequently halting to call at the houses of English planters. Everywhere we heard the same distressing tale of failure and loss: worthless crops, or good crops lost by untoward delays of one sort or another; falling prices and ruined markets, and the sickening sinking of spirit by reason of hope deferred, because annexation had failed to act as a magic wand, at whose mere approach all grievances would be righted, and each man see his own heart's desire fulfilled. At every house where we halted, we profited by that excellent institution of the colonies, tea at all hours—which we accepted the more readily knowing that we were bidding a

long farewell to milk. But the tale of poverty was one which needed no telling, for it was too plainly written on every side, especially in the untidy, uncared-for homes. Of course there are exceptions, and we called at two houses whose gardens bright with scarlet hybiscus and other blossoms were pleasant to behold, and where generous gifts of oranges, from laden trees, were a welcome addition to our stores.

It was sunset ere we reached our destination, the village of Delandamanu (*i.e.*, the hill on whose top the *damanu*-trees grow), where it was arranged that we should sleep in the church—somewhat a startling idea at first, but one which seemed less unnatural from the fact of the church being just like any other clean, well-matted house; and of course all our food was brought in ready cooked. So we rigged up our tents as usual, and, for once, slept in church with full permission from the parson!

In truth we had good reason to rejoice in our position, commanding a very lovely view of shapely mountain-ranges, and of the river winding through rich green country. The church stands on the side of a tiny hill, on the summit of which is the village graveyard. I observe these are almost invariably on hill-tops, generally very secluded, and in beautiful situations. They are often tasteful and well cared for, overshadowed by the mournful casurina or ironwood tree, called in Fijian *noko noko*, and adorned with tall red-leaved shrubs, dracæna, and others. The graves themselves are sometimes conical heaps of red earth, with white sand on the top, sometimes covered with small green pebbles, brought from afar, and sometimes merely edged with tree-fern wood. This one is peculiar, inasmuch as, although the dead are buried horizontally, the external grave slopes with the hill.

Here we lingered long in the clear, beautiful moonlight, and here we returned with the first ray of dawn. A very old man, a Fijian version of Old Mortality, lives on the extreme summit of the little hill, and has charge of the village drums—I mean the wooden *lalis*, which used to be called *lali mbokolo* (meaning the drum for the cannibal feast), but which now send forth their deep booming tones only to call the people to school or church. I should like to have stayed a good while at this place to sketch, and Mr Langham promises a longer halt on our return; but this time we had to hurry on and start at 6 A.M., having previously had prayers and breakfast.

It did feel so odd to be living in a church! Happily it was beautifully clean. And oh, what a contrast to the house of a family of white planters where we called that day! The very picture of

a poverty-stricken home. An English cottager would refuse to live in such a house, with its broken earthen floor. Such a contrast to the comfortable, thick, clean mats in the native houses we have been in. Yet white men in general seem to consider that they are bringing their families low indeed when they adopt a purely native house as home, and mats in lieu of chairs. Perhaps they are right, though for my own part I think I must confess to having rather a weakness for Fijian mat life. No doubt it tends to foster that indolence which is the bane of the islanders; and there is no denying that when once you have sunk down to rest on these soft, cool, tempting mats in the semi-darkness of a Fijian house, you do feel sorely disinclined to rise thence without very good cause. When this becomes a habit, it is a recognised evil known as mat-fever! Certainly the hard wooden chairs, or old, broken, worn-out sofas of these poor white homes, are in no danger of pampering habits of luxury. Yet at this place there were two bright lasses contriving to grow up somehow, and one of them reminded me of 'Cometh up as a Flower,' with her glorious halo of tangled yellow hair. This was the furthest point at which we found a white family. There were other neighbours, but after long battling with failing crops and ever-deepening poverty, they have all left the country in despair.

A messenger has just arrived from Rewa bringing us letters. Mine is another proof of the utter irregularity of posts which depend on vague sailing-boats. Six weeks ago I accepted an invitation to go to the Leefes' at Nananu, only a day's sail from Levuka. Receiving no further message, I wrote, a fortnight later, to put off that visit for the present; and now I have a letter from Mr Leefe, who had come to Levuka at great inconvenience to fetch me; and though the distance *is* "only a day's sail," it may involve a detention of many days.

We have been here for four days, as it is a large central district; and are very cosily housed with "Richard," the village teacher, a fine handsome fellow of the upper class, and one who takes pride in having his house a pattern of neatness and order, greatly to our comfort. Yesterday being Sunday, our crew dispersed at daybreak to hold services in many distant villages in remote valleys just emerging from heathenism. I scarcely recognised them when they all appeared in their clean white shirts and *sulus*, their ordinary working dress being merely a *sulu*, with wreaths of green leaves hanging in fringes from the waist and shoulders. But they are very particular about their Sunday shirts being well starched and

ironed, and Mrs Langham's nice Fijian girl, who helps them with their washing, has to bestow greater care on their garments than on her master's. I think I told you that they are students from the Mission Institute—fine young fellows destined to become teachers or native ministers, according to their capacity, and in the meantime doing what they can by teaching in the villages through which they pass.

The mission has in each district a certain number of such lads in training, and these, amongst them, do whatever work is required in the house and about the premises. Thence the most promising are drafted off to the college at Navouloa, which lies half-way between Rewa and Bau, where, after careful training, their ultimate destination is decided.

You can imagine it is by no means an easy matter to keep 1400 schools supplied with teachers, though the people themselves are quite willing to support them. At the present moment this difficulty is greatly increased, owing to the number of teachers who died in the measles. Mr Webb has lost ninety, and Mr Langham forty; and other districts have suffered in proportion.

The house is at this moment full of people, who have assembled from far and near to talk to Mr or Mrs Langham—men, women, and children. Naturally there is a considerable amount of chattering, to me incomprehensible. But it sounds musical, and rather like Italian, liquid, and full of vowels; not only simple vowels, but compounds, in which each letter is distinctly sounded, as *ai*, *au*, *ei*, *eu*, *oi*, *ou*, and *iu*. There are very few guttural or hissing sounds. You constantly hear names in which every other letter is a vowel, as, for example, Namosimalua, Natavutololo, Naivuruvuru, Verata, Verani, Ndrondro-vakawai, Lewe-ni-lovo, Vaka-loloma, Toalevu, &c. The first words I learnt were of course the morning and evening greetings. *Siandra?* (are you awake?) *Sa mothe?* (are you asleep?) to which the people add *na marumma* (lady), or *na turanga* (lord), or *saka* (sir). When they say *Eo saka* (yes, sir) very fast, it sounds as if they were saying it in English, which at first, hearing it from the students, I supposed to be the case. Few and laconic are my own phrases. *Maroroya* is a prayer to those around me to be careful; *kusa kusa* begs them to make haste; *sara sara* (to look about one), fully satisfies any one who might wonder what I was staring at, and comes home to the Fijian mind as quite a natural condition; *sa legge mothe*, though no means courteous, advises them to go to sleep and leave me alone. What chiefly catches my ear are the number of words formed by reduplication,

as *vesi vesi*, a little spear; *vale vale*, a little house; *kende kende*, a mountain; *noko noko*, ironwood; *vula vula*, white; *dre dre*, difficult; *mothe mothe*, bed (*mothe* means sleep); *yau yau*, mist; *kata kata*, boiling; *lia lia*, silly; *wai wai*, oil; *levu* is big; *lei lei*, small; *vulu vulu*, cramfull; *velo velo*, a canoe; *reki reki*, joy; *vuvu*, jealous; *dronga dronga*, hoarse, &c. And so in the names of places. I hear of Loma Loma, Somo Somo, Sau Sau, Drua Drua, Ruku Ruku, Savu Savu, and so on. In case you care to count in Fijian, here are the numerals. One, two, three, &c. *Dua, rua, tolu, va, lima, ono, vitu, walu, ciwa* (*thiwa*), *tini*. Then come *tine ka dua, tine ka rua*, and so on up to twenty. There are certain nouns which in themselves express numbers, as: *sasa*, ten mats; *rara*, ten pigs; *bure*, ten clubs; *bola*, a hundred canoes; *selavo*, a thousand cocoa-nuts. These are used in combination with ordinary numerals, thus: *Rua sasa*, twenty mats; *tini selavo*, ten thousand nuts.

I am told that the language is remarkably rich, and expresses minute shades of ideas. Thus there are three words for the possessive pronouns, varying with the nature of the noun following, as *my* food, *my* drink, or *my* canoe. Personal pronouns are equally varied; there are no less than six words answering to our *we*.

There are seven words to express different conditions of weariness, six to express seeing, a dozen for dirty, fourteen for to cut, sixteen for to strike. There are separate expressions for washing clothes, house, dishes, feet, hands, body, face, or head; also for such varied movement as that of a caterpillar, a lizard, or a serpent, or for the different manners in which it is possible to clap hands ceremonially.

So you can understand that it is not only a very rich tongue, but also an exceedingly troublesome one to learn accurately; and as very slight mistakes are apt to convey to native ears very different ideas to those we wish to convey, you can understand that I prefer being very troublesome to my most patient companions, rather than plunge headlong into such difficulties.

Of course both Mr and Mrs Langham talk it to perfection, for they have lived entirely with the people for seventeen years, and know every detail about all the native tribes and their chiefs, and their quarrels, and their domestic troubles. Mr Langham was for years going to and fro among the cannibal tribes, when they were all at war, as mediator and teacher, urging them to make peace and to abstain from the horrible customs of heathenism, and accept the loving law of Christ. His way is smooth enough now, but there was stiff work to do till very recent days; for he has seen Fiji in

all its phases,—all successive varieties of governments or anarchies. And he and his gentle little wife have lived in the midst of fightings and wars, in the days when the name of Fiji was synonymous with cannibalism and cruelties of the most horrible description.

Now I am going out to explore some of the trails which lead to higher ridges, that I may see the mountains in the interior, some of which rise to a height of 5000 or 6000 feet, but are hidden from us by nearer ranges. It makes me laugh now to remember how, the first day I was walking alone on the hills of Ovalau, I hid myself among the bushes from a solitary Fijian, the savage of my imagination. Now, in far wilder country, I walk alone in perfect security wherever fancy leads me.

CHAPTER IX.

BATHING *AL FRESCO*—THE UPPER REWA—BARTER—NATIVE HOUSES—A FUNERAL—WEDDINGS—GRACE.

NAKORO VATU (THE STONE TOWN),
December 19, 1875.

DEAREST JEAN,—You will have heard from Eisa of our start from Rewa. Now we are a long way up the river, and indulging in a sort of continuous picnic, which is full of interest to me, though very difficult to describe so as to convey to you any idea of its fascination to one actually living in it.

The stream, of course, narrowed rapidly as we ascended, and in doing so gained immensely in interest. Gradually we approached beautiful mountain-ranges, and whenever we landed and ascended even the smallest rising ground, we found ourselves encircled by a panorama of rare loveliness. But of course, so long as we were on the water-level our horizon was bounded by the river-banks, and after a while the mere loveliness of vegetation became almost monotonous, and we found ourselves gliding unheeding past forests of tree-ferns and grand old trees, festooned with a network of lianas, rich and rare, such as a few days previously would have driven us into ecstasies of delight. Here and there, where some quiet pool in a rocky stream offered a tempting bathing-place, we called a halt, and therein revelled, while the boatmen were boiling

the kettle and preparing breakfast or lunch in some shady nook at a respectful distance. No words can describe to you how delicious are such impromptu bathes in clear sparkling streams, embowered in exquisite ferns, which meet overhead, throwing a cool shade on the water, and forming a lovely tracery, through which you get glimpses of the bluest sky. And the light that does reach you is mellowed, and the colour of the great fronds is like that tender green of beech-woods in early spring; and the water is so fresh and delightful that you would fain prolong your bathe all day.

We halted several days at Navounindrala, where the river branches off into two heads, the Wai Nimala and the Wai Nimbooco, both too shallow at this season to admit of the large boat going any further; so, leaving it at the junction, we transferred our three selves to one very large canoe, while two ordinary ones carried our necessary goods. Thenceforward we paddled and poled by turns, as occasion demanded; and when any difficulty arose in ascending rapids, we invariably found ready helpers willing to lend us their aid.

We first proceeded up the Wai Nimbooco, sleeping at various villages, in which no white women had previously set foot; nor, indeed, any white teacher, for it is only a year since these people were cannibal and heathen. The first native teachers sent to them died in the measles, and those now sent to replace them are men from the Windward Isles, half Tongan, and they find great difficulty in mastering the mountain dialect, which differs greatly from that of Bau and other coast districts. But the people seem eager to make the very most of their small advantages, and everywhere we find flourishing schools and most devout congregations; and our party receives cordial welcome, the villagers crowding round to shake hands, foreign fashion. I certainly prefer this to having my hand sniffed impressively!

In some villages the people brought very curious bowls, clubs, and spears for sale, and I have greatly enlarged my collection. Some of the wood-carving is so fine that it fills me with wonder, when I remember that hitherto the only implements of these artists have been stone-axes, and rats' or sharks' teeth to do the finer work. Imagine the patience and contrivance which every carved spear-head represents. I bought several very tall carved walking-sticks, used by the old men, which I think some of you will like to adopt as alpenstocks, though you can never hope to look as picturesque as the fine old men who brought them to me. They generally ask for large strong knives, or so many fathoms of very

wide strong white calico, in preference to money, and are very discriminating as to quality, having learnt by sad experience how worthless are the cheap Manchester fabrics sent to these isles for trade with natives—mere whitened shams, made up with dressing, and useless when washed.

Each night we slept at a different native house, and became quite expert at rigging up our mosquito-curtains to the rafters, and constructing little rooms of matting, to give us each a corner to ourselves, always planned so as, if possible, to include an open door, to secure fresh air, for these people are as careful to exclude the night air as any old woman in Scotland.

When our sleeping quarters are arranged, then comes the curious evening meal, followed by family prayers, with reading and singing, at which are present a troop of villagers, who have previously assembled to see the strange white people eat the food presented by themselves—happily with the addition of tea and sugar, and white bread, which Mrs Langham (notable housekeeper) succeeds in baking, on every possible occasion, in a small portable oven.

All the houses, whether of chief or vassal, are alike built on a foundation of stones several feet high. Thus the house is raised above the damp ground. Sometimes you enter by steps, rudely hewn from one log; and a wooden bowl of water invites the visitor to wash his feet before entering. We invariably take off our boots to avoid dirtying the nice clean mats. Every house consists of only one room, varying, of course, in size; but the largest must be limited to the length of one piece of timber, which is the ridge-pole, and with two other roughly hewn trees, laid lengthwise, supports the frame-work of rafters, whereon rests the heavy thatched roof, the whole sustained by upright trees, notched at the top, and all bound together with strongly knotted stems of some forest vine. The sides are supported, and doorways formed, by black pillars, about ten feet in height, made of the stems of beautiful tree-ferns, which here grow in such abundance that they are commonly used for making fences, also for edging graves.

In building a large house about a hundred of these pillars are required. Those forming the doorway are frequently bound with *sinnet* (which is a kind of coarse string), black, brown, or yellow, interwoven so as to form most elaborate patterns, extremely artistic in effect. Sometimes in churches, all the rafters are thus adorned, each being of a different design, telling of the patient care that has been lavished on their decoration. Sometimes, too, they are ornamented with pure white shells (the *Cyprea ovula*), strings of which

are also wreathed round the projecting ends of the ridge-pole, and hang thence in long graceful festoons.[1]

The walls, both of houses and churches, are generally formed of reeds, with a thick outer coating of dried leaves. You can fancy how readily such buildings burn on the smallest provocation; the only marvel is why fires are not far more numerous, considering the extreme carelessness with which the blazing bamboos, which act the part of candles, are carried about; to say nothing of the fireplaces, of which there are occasionally several in one house, and which are merely hollows sunk in the floor, with an edge of rough wood dividing them from the mats. One of these is generally in the centre of the house. Chimneys are unknown luxuries; so the smoke floats about at random, and settles in rich brown layers on the rafters, and on the household goods that rest thereon, which sometimes include an old war-club of curious form, which probably has made short work of many a foeman's skull, or a long black spear, with three or four feet of most beautiful and intricate carving extending upward from the head.

There is generally a sort of scaffolding of rude posts and shelves above the fire, which is used for cooking, and here, through the thick blue wood-smoke you perceive various cooking-pots and earthenware jars. Carved wooden bowls of various form and size hang round the walls: some with curiously carved handles, of which you never see two alike, are used to contain oil; others are used in the manufacture of the noxious national drink called *yangona* (elsewhere throughout the Pacific known as *kava*).

The large wooden bowls in which the yangona is prepared, and the small cocoa-nut shells in which it is served, both acquire a beautiful enamel, sometimes of a bluish colour, which is called the bloom, and gives great value to the bowl. A few wooden pillows —merely a stick or bamboo on two short legs—complete the scanty household inventory. There is no more furniture of any sort.

All round the fires lie the family and their friends on their mats, beneath which is spread a thick layer of soft dry grass.

We always occupy what I may call the "company bedroom;" for though the whole floor of the house is alike covered with mats, the best are reserved for the upper end, which is generally raised about a foot, forming a sort of dais for the use of the principal persons present, and often carpeted with a pile of fine mats. This is invariably given up to us, and here, as I told you, we hang up

[1] The ridge-pole of a new house is frequently wreathed with long trails of the exquisite God-fern, the *Wa Kalo*.

our mosquito-curtains, and with the help of a few mats and plaids quickly rig up our simple tents.

The other end of the room is generally crowded all day. Happily most of the natives clear out at night; but so long as the rare spectacle of three white faces is to be seen we cannot wonder at the interest created, one which, I am bound to say, is reciprocal. Many of our visitors walk for miles across the mountains, bringing us presents of food; for, however poor they may be themselves, the customs of Fiji require that the utmost hospitality should be shown to strangers; and in the case of such honoured guests as a missionary and his party, every care must be taken that they, at least, shall find no lack of whatever the villages can supply.

After spending a week on the Wai Nimbooco we returned to the junction, and thence turned up the course of the other stream, the Wai Nimala, and at sunset reached this town. We were greatly tantalised by the charming position of the teacher's house, on a somewhat isolated hill, commanding a grand view; but, as a matter of policy, we had to stay at the chief's house, in the very middle of the village, and felt it close and stuffy, though it is a large house, very well built. Eight large trees form the main pillars, while upwards of one hundred fine tree-ferns have been sacrificed to make the small black pillars on either side. The walls are of double reeds, crossed; very beautiful patterns of fine sinnet-work (*i.e.*, coloured string), on the lintels, and hanging curtains of long grass. The chief himself is ill, lying before a blazing fire, which, with a thermometer at about 80°, is scarcely our idea of comfort. The only thing he seemed to enjoy is an occasional bowl of very sweet tea, which Mrs L. makes for him, and which is a very great luxury; though to us the lack of milk is a continual drawback. Sometimes we make cream by grating cocoa-nut and squeezing it through a cloth; but though delicious for very occasional use, it is so rich that we very quickly take a strong aversion to it, and prefer to do without. Occasionally we get an egg, which, beaten up, is really an excellent substitute.

A poor fellow in the house next to us was very ill all last night, and died this morning. He was a stranger, with no one to mourn for him, so he was rolled up in an old mat, with head and feet protruding, and thus carried to his grave. On reaching the place, Mr Langham found it had been dug too short, so it had to be lengthened at the last moment. It is a pretty burial-ground, the graves, as usual, edged with tree-fern wood. I had a solitary walk up the hill, through tall reeds, up gullies shaded by rank plantains,

all matted with lovely vines, and had a grand view from the high ground. This village is clean and orderly.

To-day being Sunday there has been much church-going,—very large and attentive congregations,—apparently most devout. After morning service there were no less than thirteen weddings! Some were new couples; others very old folk, who wished to be legally wedded on the occasion of their becoming Christian and *one-wived*. The superfluous wives are in large demand by men who hitherto have failed to secure domestic bliss. We also had several baptisms —one was a big child, who was so much alarmed at the sight of the white teacher that he ran away howling.

At this moment I am surrounded by a crowd of brown women, who have crept up to me very shyly and cautiously, and are watching the progress of this letter with great interest. Already some of them have begun to learn writing, and many can read quite fluently. To-morrow there is to be a great school examination. Supper is ready—roast pig and *taro;* and all are hungry, but waiting for Mr L. to say grace,—so I must go. Good-night.—Your loving sister.

CHAPTER X.

UPPER REWA—SUNDAY AMONG THE CONVERTS—SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS—A "MISSIONARY MEETING"—SAVAGE ORNAMENTS—RED TAPE—*MÁKES*—EVENING PRAYER—MARRIAGES.

NIRUKURUKU, ON THE UPPER REWA RIVER,
December 23*d*.

MY DEAR ALEXA,—I have not written to you since I started on this trip, but of course you have heard all my news from the others. We came here yesterday in the canoe, as the rapids are so strong that the boat could not face them, and the men, strong as they are, had to call others to their aid, and even then had hard work to pull us up stream. But the scenery is most lovely, though we rarely leave the water-level, and the glimpses we do get of the grand mountains make us long to penetrate right up to them. But this would involve far too much walking for either Mrs Langham or myself, and there is no other means of locomotion. Oh, what I would give to have my dear Himalayan *dandie* here, with a team

of strong Paharis (hill-men) to carry me! The highlanders here (the Kai Colos, men of the mountains) are just as strong, but the idea of carrying a lady has not yet occurred to them; indeed we are the first specimens of the race whom they have seen!

This is the furthest point to which we can go, and here we are to spend Christmas, as Mr Langham is anxious to hold service himself on that day, and the people will assemble from far and near.

I think it might well startle some of our sleepy congregations to find themselves in a Fijian church (of which there are 900 in these isles, for every village which becomes Christian begins by building a church and a teacher's house, and undertakes to feed and clothe the latter, besides giving him small payment in kind for individual schooling).

To say nothing of largely attended week-day evening services, there are on Sundays three regular services, beginning with a prayer-meeting at 6 A.M. Each of these is crowded, and a large number also attend Sunday-school in the afternoon; and many prove how attentively they have listened to the teacher by repeating on Monday the whole substance of the sermons preached the previous day.

The form of service is much the same as in a Presbyterian church, with the addition of the Te Deum and Apostles' Creed, which are chanted in the native fashion, the missionaries having wisely made use of native customs when practicable. The purely national tunes, if such I may call them, have a certain attraction in their drone-like monotony; those borrowed from us are generally discordant, but certainly heartily rendered; and the apparent earnestness in prayer of all present is most striking. Every one, without exception, kneels on the matted floor (of course there are no seats), and lies doubled up, with head resting on the earth, touching the bare feet of the kneeler in front of him. Here and there a tiny brown child stands beside its mother, the only creature not prostrate. You can look at this scene as long as you please, certain that no one will look up and catch you staring, for never a head is raised. So you overlook a closely packed mosaic of tawny frizzled heads, bare brown backs, and white *sulus* (kilts).

Nor is there the slightest reason for thinking that this is merely an outward show of devotion. Everything in daily life tends to prove its reality. The first sound that greets your ear in the morning, and the last at night, is the sound of family worship in every house in the village. I am positively assured that the presence of the white missionary makes no appreciable difference

in the congregations, and that the churches are just as crowded when there is only the native teacher to lead the simple worship.

One thing which strikes us forcibly in all our dealings with these people is their exceeding honesty. Day after day our goods are exposed in the freest manner, more especially on Sundays, when for several hours not a creature remains in the house where we happen to be staying, which is left with every door wide open, and all our things lying about. Boxes and bags which are known to contain knives and cloth and all manner of tempting treasures, stand unlocked, and yet, though the village is invariably within a stone's-throw, we have never lost the value of a pin's head. I confess, however, it was some time before I could stifle all qualms of misgiving on seeing a crowd of what some people might call savages swoop down on our property and carry it off piecemeal to the boat or village, as the case might be; but when day after day passed and nothing was ever missing, I gradually acquired the implicit trust which has proved so well founded.

Poor as these people are, their generosity is most remarkable, and they give freely of such things as they have, both to those among themselves who may be in need, and also for the spread of the Christian cause. Not only does each village support its own teacher, but considerable offerings for a general fund are made at the annual school examinations and "missionary meetings." Nothing could be more distressing than to have nothing to give on such a day, so those who have no money will walk miles across the hills, bringing some treasured bowl or spear for sale; and great is the anxiety to receive payment in numerous small coins, that no member of the family may appear empty-handed on the great feast-day. Very often, however, it is to obtain a copy of the precious Fijian Testament that the household treasure is thus offered for sale; for already an immense number can read, and are as well instructed in Bible history and precepts as any Scotch peasant of the good old school.

What a very tame scene a school examination at home will seem after those we have here witnessed, with the multitude of brown scholars, all so very attentive! Certainly we have no cause to complain of over-dressing or use of artificial flowers; but the usual wreaths of green, lilac, or yellow leaves, hanging in long fringes from waist and shoulders, figure largely, also those made of long narrow leaves of the screw-pine, gaily dyed red and yellow.

At one place we found the scholars, old and young, of eight villages assembled to receive us. They began, as usual, by coming

up in procession, and each depositing an offering at the feet of the missionary. This generally consists of one root of yam or *taro*, a bunch of tobacco-leaves, a sugar-cane, or a yangona root; but on this occasion some discriminating scholars brought old war-clubs and bowls, to say nothing of a pile of the fringe dresses aforesaid! Then followed a *méké*, which is a quaint national dance with accompaniment of singing.

Some of the old *mékés* are not considered desirable, as, for example, that dance of death which accompanied the carrying of dead bodies to the temple, preparatory to cooking them, and others of heathen or immoral association. The schools are therefore encouraged to select new subjects. So they gave us a dance and pantomime all about the capture of Jerusalem, and very curious it was. Then they went through very creditable Scriptural examination and recitation, with some reading and writing, and finished off with a most extraordinary method of spelling and doing mental arithmetic. I cannot attempt to describe it, further than to say that though all the scholars as usual sat on the ground, the whole body was in perpetual motion, swaying from side to side, each row in opposite directions. There was incessant clapping of hands, now on one side, now on the other, now on the ground, now in mid-air, and all in measured time; while the calculations were shouted aloud, and apparently produced a correct result. The action gone through for the spelling and arithmetic lesson was quite different, though wholly indescribable. In all these movements the most accurate time is marked. In some schools geography is also taught, the lesson being a series of chanted questions and answers, which, however musical, can scarcely be expected to convey much meaning to the mind of the Fijian, who assuredly believes his own isles to be the greatest and most important in the world. At the close of the proceedings, each scholar approached in turn, and stripping off his or her green wreaths, laid them in a heap at our feet, whence they were removed by the boatmen for their own adornment. Such is a school examination in Fiji.

As for the missionary meetings, they by no means resemble those held in Exeter Hall! They are simply great days of native merry-making, when the missionaries very wisely encourage the people to keep up the most popular and innocent of their national games and dances, and when all who attend bring offerings according to their ability and inclination.

The first meeting of this sort at which I was present was held

at the junction of two heads of the great Rewa river, the Wai Nimbooco and the Wai Nimala. On the first day, the people of seventeen towns (or villages) assembled, and the crowd must have numbered fully 2000. On the following day about ten more towns arrived, and, with slight variations, the programme was repeated. We sat under trees on the river-bank, facing the village green, and each town came up in turn in procession, all quaintly dressed up as if for a fancy ball, and marched slowly past us, every one carrying his offering in his mouth for greater security—a purse at once novel and self-acting; for, as both hands were often busy with spear and fan, it was a saving of trouble, and by no means disrespectful, just to spit out the coin on the mat spread to receive offerings. Some had quite a mouthful to give—three or four shillings. The latter was a sum much aimed at, as the donors of such large contributions had the pride of knowing that their names would appear in a printed list! an honour not wholly without attraction even in Fiji.

The town then divided into two companies. One acted as orchestra, sitting on the ground,—some clapping hands, sometimes with the palms flat, sometimes hollowed, to produce diversity of tone—some striking the ground with short, resonant bamboos, held vertically, which produce a strange booming sound—all singing old words, the meaning of which they have in many cases forgotten. The chant is invariably commenced by one voice, and the chorus takes it up after a few notes. The other company danced,—the quaintest, wildest dances you can conceive, with much pantomime and most graceful action. Every action and posture one sees in a good ballet are found here; and such pretty grouping with fans, spears, or clubs. Many of the figures are very intricate, and the rapidity of movement and flexibility of the whole body are something marvellous, — it seems as if every muscle was in action, and all the postures are graceful. The dance gets wilder and more excited as it goes on, generally ending with an unearthly yell, in which all the spectators join.

They are all sitting round in every available corner, generally spreading a bit of plantain-leaf on the ground to keep their dress clean: for, of course, every one is attired in his very best—perhaps a kilt of English long-cloth (or, far more attractive in our eyes, native cloth of rich brown pattern). White native cloth is worn as a girdle, and hangs behind in large folds; wreaths of long hanging grass are worn round the arms and legs, as well as on the body. Some even powder their hair black, or else

wear huge wigs of heathen days, and crowns of scarlet parrots' feathers.

Most have their faces painted with every variety of colour, in stripes, circles, and spots. Some are all scarlet, with black spectacles, or *vice versâ;* some, of a very gaudy turn of mind, half blue and half scarlet. Some are painted half plain and half spotted, or striped like clowns. In short, fancy has free scope in devising grotesque patterns of every sort. Many are entirely blackened down to the waist, or perhaps have one side of the face and one shoulder dyed dark-red; but the commonest and ugliest freak of all is to paint only the nose bright scarlet, and the rest of the face dead black, and very hideous is the result.

The paint-box on these occasions is simple: red ochre supplies one shade, and the seeds of the vermilion-tree, so dull in the pod, but so brilliant when crushed, supply another. The nearest wood-fire yields black in abundance; while a dark-brown fungus is found on the bark of certain trees, and finds immense favour with many who cannot understand how infinitely more beautiful is the rich brown of their own silky skin, with its gloss of cocoa-nut oil. The gaudy blue is a recent addition to their stock—from English laundries; and an unusually vivid scarlet likewise tells occasionally of dealings with British traders.[1]

On great festivals the family jewels are all displayed. They consist of necklaces of whales' teeth rudely fastened together with sinnet, or else most carefully cut into long curved strips like miniature tusks, highly polished, and strung together in the form of a great collar, which is worn with the curved points turning outwards like a frill. The average length of each tooth is about six inches; but some necklaces, which are treasured as heirlooms, are nearly double this size, and all the teeth are beautifully regular. Their effect when worn by a chief in full dress is singularly picturesque, though scarcely so becoming as the large curved boar's tooth, which sometimes forms an almost double circle, and is worn suspended from the neck, the white ivory gleaming against the rich brown skin.

[1] I think the most incongruous instance that has come under our notice of this adoption of certain English goods, was when a large number of the wild heathen mountaineers assembled to meet the Governor—many of them atoning for lack of raiment by the care bestowed on their mass of hair dressed in upright spiral curls, which makes the head resemble a gigantic mop. Of course during the interview they remained bareheaded (as essential a mark of respect in Fiji as is a huge turban in India). But when they subsequently replaced the accustomed veil of thin gauze-like *tappa*, they proceeded to tie it up with red tape, little dreaming what visions of dull routine were therewith connected in the minds of the white strangers.

The most artistic and uncommon ornament of a Fijian chief is a breast-plate from six to ten inches in diameter, made of polished whale's tooth, sliced and inlaid with pearly shell, all most beautifully joined together. These, like all native work, whether wood-carving or ivory, not only claim admiration, but fill me with wonder at the patient ingenuity which could possibly produce such results with the tools hitherto possessed by these people, to whom metals were unknown, whose axes and hatchets were made of smooth and beautifully polished greenstone (precisely similar to the celts of our forefathers, and how they made these is to me incomprehensible). I have bought several tied with coarse sinnet to a rude handle of wood cut in the form of a bent knee. When the stone axe had accomplished the first rough shaping of the form required, a skilfully used fire-stick next came into use, and then a lump of mushroom coral, or a piece of the rough skin of the sting-ray, stretched on wood, acted as a rasp or file. A fine polish was attained by patient friction with pumice-stone and cocoa-nut oil. The only other tools of the Fijian workman consisted of broken shells, the teeth of rats and fishes, or the sharp spines of the echini, set in hard wood. Yet with these rude implements these untutored savages (if so we should call them) produced forms so artistic, and carving so elaborate and graceful, as must excite the keen admiration of all lovers of art.

But alas for the vulgarising influence of contact with white men! Already the majority of the islanders have sold their own admirable ornaments, and wear instead trashy English necklaces, with perhaps a circular tin looking-glass attached, or an old cotton-reel in the ear instead of a rudely carved ear-ring. In the more frequented districts this lamentable change thrusts itself more forcibly on the attention, as almost all the fine old clubs and beautifully carved spears have been bought up, and miserable sticks and nondescript articles—including old European battle-axes—take their place.

Here in the mountains each company carried spears, clubs, or fans, all of which played their part in the various dances—most of which are so old, that the meaning of the songs and pantomime are alike forgotten by the actors. In one long piece of by-play all the men of the village appeared dressed alike, their heads being plastered with lime, looking just like powdered footmen (only that they were brown and naked to the waist). It was so very solemn that we thought some terrible tragedy was being recounted; but we were told it was only a story about an empty basket!

In one very odd dance, a queer, fluttering creature, with a huge

fan in each hand to represent wings, kept dancing round and round a covey of cowering children, whom he bowled over, two at a time. Then, as they lay prone, he fanned them to life again, and so drove them along to join the orchestra. This is supposed to be a bird of prey providing for her young, and of a species unknown in Fiji!

Somewhat similar is a dance in which half the men are armed with spears, the other half carry large fans of palm-leaf, or of native cloth stretched on a wooden frame, and adorned with blue and white streamers. At the end of each movement every dancer holds his fan high above his head with simultaneous action, uttering a wild, high-pitched war-cry. After an intricate dance, in which extraordinary feats of agility are displayed, these two companies form into separate lines and have a sham fight. Again and again the whole regiment of spearmen fall flat on the ground, as if all slain simultaneously, and the others, bending over them, fan them assiduously till life is restored, and they once more spring to their feet. This is a particularly pretty dance: no carefully studied ballet could be more effective.

Another, which is particularly characteristic, is a club-dance, in which half the men present are armed with war-clubs of very varied and curious forms, while the others carry long and beautifully carved spears. Sometimes each man carries a spear in one hand and a club in the other; and often, I regret to say, a number of common muskets replace the old clubs, and look strangely out of keeping with the barbaric surroundings. On festivals such as these, many of the clubs are as carefully decorated as their owners. Coloured strips of *pandanus* leaf or fibre-plaiting are wound around them, adorned with fringe-like tufts; some are rather coarsely touched up with scarlet or blue paint, which happily soon rubs off. These war-parties always advance slowly, attitudinising and swinging from side to side. Gradually they become more animated, brandish their spears and clubs, go through all manner of evolutions, keeping such perfect time that each line of warriors seems to move like one man—every hand and foot moving in unison. The speed and action go on increasing till each individual dancer seems to be performing the closing movements of a Highland fling or a sailor's hornpipe, but with far more varied postures. At some of the larger gatherings, from two to three hundred dancers will join in the *méké*, and as they are generally the picked men of the district, the scene is the more effective. In every dance there is a leader, who by word and example regulates the time for every change in the figures. This post of honour is often awarded to a

very small boy, son of the chief; and you cannot think how pretty it is to see all these splendid fellows moving like clock-work in obedience to the slightest action of a tiny child, most quaintly dressed, and entering keenly into his duties. He begins in the most dramatic manner by delivering a shrill exhortation to his *corps de ballet*, and then leads them with perfect accuracy through every manœuvre of advance, retreat, &c., &c.

Each district has certain dances peculiar to itself, and the people of one neither can nor will join in the *méké* of another. Thus the people of aristocratic Bau positively sneered when asked whether they could not perform some of the dances of their neighbours at Rewa, which monopolises the most graceful *méké* of all—namely, one which represents the breaking of the waves on a coral-reef—a poetic idea admirably rendered. Years ago I remember the delight with which we hailed an exquisite statuette in Sir Noel Paton's studio, representing the curling of a wave, by a beautiful female figure, supposed to be floating thereon; but I never dreamt that we should find the same idea so perfectly carried out by a race whom we have been wont to think of only as ruthless savages.

The idea to be conveyed is that of the tide gradually rising on the reef, till at length there remains only a little coral isle, round which the angry breakers rage, flinging their white foam on every side. At first the dancers form in long lines and approach silently, to represent the quiet advance of the waves. After a while the lines break up into smaller companies, which advance with out-spread hands and bodies bent forward, to represent rippling wave-lets, the tiniest waves being represented by children. Quicker and quicker they come on, now advancing, now retreating, yet, like true waves, steadily progressing, and gradually closing on every side of the imaginary islet, round which they play or battle, after the manner of breakers, springing high in mid-air, and flinging their arms far above their heads to represent the action of spray. As they leap and toss their heads, the soft white *masi* or native cloth (which for greater effect they wear as a turban with long streamers, and also wind round the waist, thence it floats in long scarf-like ends) trembles and flutters in the breeze. The whole effect is most artistic, and the orchestra do their part by imitating the roar of the surf on the reef—a sound which to them has been a never-ceasing lullaby from the hour of their birth.

Another *méké* peculiar to this district represents a flock of flying-foxes in act of robbing a garden of ripe bananas. Perhaps a couple of hundred foxes will assemble, to say nothing of a company of

little foxes. A tree bearing the coveted fruit is fastened to a strong pole in the centre of the ground—and it says much for the native sense of humour that, instead of hanging up a bunch of real bananas, they must needs devise an artificial bunch, with a square gin-bottle filled with oil hanging from the tip, to represent the great purple blossom. In the first figure of the dance scouts are sent out to see that the coast is clear, and they flutter round the imaginary garden with outstretched arms, imitating the cry of the flying-fox. Soon the whole flock approach, chattering noisily over the prospects of the feast, circling and fluttering round and round after the manner of all bats. Then one proceeds to climb the tree, and hangs himself up by the legs, head downwards, with outstretched arms, flapping his wings and crying just like a flying-fox. A second soon follows, and disputes his position. They squeal, and scratch, and bite one another, and a battle of the bats ensues, in which the first-comer is routed. After a while some one shoots the intruder, who falls helplessly from the tree. All this time the rest of the flock have been dancing and fluttering around, the peculiar movements of bats being admirably rendered, even to the rushing sound of wings, which is given by a jerk of the body, which causes all the *liqus* to swing simultaneously; and these being made of dried leaves of the *pandanus* or screw-pine, which are long and narrow as a grass, rustle on the slightest movement, and their combined noise produces a rushing sound, greatly resembling that of the black-winged army.

As an illustration of a comic dance, I may mention a pantomime representing a pig-hunt. He is supposed to be concealed in the long grass, and the hunters, round whose necks hang large boars' tusks, very suggestive of danger from such a hidden foe, advance cautiously in search of him. At last he is found, captured alive, and dragged in triumph to the village, amid the acclamations of the spectators.[1]

[1] Mr Maudslay told us of some very quaint *mêkês* sung by the children at Nandi. They were reciting their lesson in natural history, and related many novel facts wholly unknown to science, concerning birds and insects, whose cries and songs they imitated. They specially described the mosquito, by humming and buzzing, all in measured time, and with uniform action, clapping their arms, and legs, and bodies, as if smarting from bites. Then, as if irritated beyond endurance, they threw their arms wildly about, till in despair they ceased, as if nerved for endurance, and resigned themselves to listen to the mosquito's songs, whereupon the mosquitoes applauded their patience, and shouted *Vinaka! Vinaka!* (good! good!) The mosquito, it seems, is the only creature that truly mourns for man, for he can no longer drink his blood and sing songs to him; whereas other beasts rejoice over his death as that of a foe, more especially the ants, to whom his teeth are as precious as those of a whale are to a Fijian!

But on this particular occasion the representations were chiefly of such real warfare as that in which the dancers had so often been engaged,—the stealthy advance of scouts—the surprise, skirmish, and victory—dancers gradually working themselves up to a pitch of wildest excitement, and breaking forth into ear-piercing yells, in which the spectators did their part. This, and the painting and blackening of the warriors, produced an effect so truly diabolic, that it was hard to realise its being only a game. The *méké* had gone on for nearly seven hours, when darkness closing in, compelled the remaining towns to reserve their dances, and the presentation of their offerings, till the following morning.

It occurred to us that there might very likely be some torch-light dancing in the village, so after supper we strolled thither, but scarcely saw a creature out of doors. But from within almost every house we passed came the voice of most fervent family prayer, telling how the household and their guests were closing that day of much excitement.

A man has just come up from Nakorovatu with the horrible news that a boy was killed there this morning by a shark, at the very spot where we embarked yesterday. The brute caught him by the leg, tore off the calf, and broke the bone. The shore was lined with spectators, but they could not help, and by the time that some men contrived to drag away the poor fellow he was so terribly injured that he died almost immediately. Several of our men bathed there yesterday, and we also occasionally bathe in the river when we can find no pleasanter or more secluded stream. But this really is most alarming, for we certainly thought ourselves safe from sharks at this distance from the sea — fully thirty miles. Lower down the river they are a fully recognised danger, and a man was recently carried off while bathing at Nundiokar, one of the villages where we halted, a few days ago.

There is a perfect crowd of interesting young couples just coming in to be married, so I must watch the proceedings. The brides appear shy, and the bridegrooms bashful. I am sorry to observe that some of the brides are both ugly and old! They do not wear such quantities of pretty white and brown cloth as the brides on the coast; in fact, they wear exceedingly little of anything. Perhaps they were too poor to buy a *trousseau*. Anyhow, this is rather a dingy lot of weddings. Now good night.—Your loving sister.

CHAPTER XI.

CHRISTMAS IN GREAT FIJI—PIG FEASTS—WEDDINGS—FIJIAN NAMES—CANNIBAL DAINTIES—CHRISTMAS CHIMES—SNEEZING—"OUR FATHER" IN FIJIAN.

(From a native Fijian house at Nirukuruku, a moated town on the banks of the Wai Nimala, one of the many heads of the great river Rewa, the richest land in Viti Levu—*i.e.*, Great Fiji.)

"And strangely fell our Christmas Eve."

Christmas Day, 1875.

Dear Nell,—Do you remember the Christmas Eve at the Bridge of Allan, when we first quoted that line to one another? when we had seen the last of the dear old home, and the newly fallen snow lay on our father's grave, and we two looked down past that unfamiliar spire to the cold white world beyond, and wondered what might lie before us in the untried future? I have had some strange Christmases since then, but this is the strangest of all, as you would say could you only suddenly look in upon us. . . .

Though the people are so very friendly, and in many respects very nice, still this is undoubted life among savages; and after a while there is considerable sameness in halting at one village after another, taking up our quarters in its best house, which invariably consists only of one large room, the lower half of which is generally full of natives all day. Most of them clear out at night; but generally at least once a-day—sometimes twice in one day—they bring us a feast, consisting of a pig roasted whole—a sucking-pig, or an old one, as the case may be—wrapped up in large plantain-leaves, many baskets of cooked yams and *taros*, and native puddings tied up in leaves. Boiled vegetables (sometimes fish and crawfish) are brought in and offered again in the evening.

Besides the regular feasts provided by each village, many of the marriage-parties send in offerings of food, as the parson's share of their feast, so we are in no danger of starving. Yet the people really are very poor, and, except on such festal occasions as these, live only on yams. But wherever we have halted—and sometimes several times in the course of a day—"a feast" has been brought for us,—a procession of women carrying baskets full of cooked vegetables, purple or white yams, *taro*, and sweet potatoes, fowls

in cooking-pots, fish, crawfish, prawns, and native puddings made of banana, and grated cocoa-nut sweetened with sugar-cane, and served in a large banana-leaf. At some places large fresh-water mussels, greatly resembling those of our Scotch rivers, have been supplied, and proved excellent. When served at table they resemble poached eggs, and when their thick white skin is cut open they yield a delicacy suggestive rather of a French *cuisine* than of a Fijian hut. Where these abound they form an important article of food, as is shown by the piles of purple-lined shells which lie thickly strewn round the villages, and which made me wonder whether the pearl-yielding mussel of our Scotch rivers might not be found equally useful as an addition to the limited bill of fare of our own poor.

Beef and mutton are luxuries which have only been introduced by white men for their own use, and are probably not to be found anywhere save in Levuka, the capital of the isles. But pigs were imported at an earlier period, and quickly found such favour with the people that they now roam at large in every village, and a feast of roast pork is to a Fijian the very crown of bliss.

The highest honour, therefore, that can be shown to any guest, is to present him with a pig, sometimes full grown, sometimes an interesting suckling, but in any case roasted whole, which is accomplished by filling him with red-hot stones, and baking him in a hole in the ground, lined with more hot stones and green leaves. Wrapped in this leafy covering, he is next placed on a carved wooden tray, and borne triumphantly to the house where the stranger is lodging, and there deposited, with all the other good things aforesaid, on the mats near the furthest door, which naturally suffer a good deal in consequence.

The feast is then formally presented, and as formally accepted, with set speeches and measured hand-clapping. The pig is then cut up, and the feast duly apportioned among all present, this distribution being also made strictly according to rule; for in Fiji rigid etiquette rules every action of life, and the most trifling mistake in such matters would cause as great dissatisfaction as a breach in the order of precedence at a European ceremonial. To apportion the pig's head to any save the principal person present would inevitably result in that person leaving the house in high dudgeon; and as chiefs of various villages may have arrived simultaneously to visit the new-comer, it is sometimes an embarrassing question how to satisfy the dignity of all. Happily in our case the feasts are generally divided by Johnny, the head boatman, who, being

himself a chief of this district, is well informed on all such matters. We are amusingly reminded of his nobility by hearing the clapping of hands, with which an admiring circle invariably proclaim the close of his meals.

To-day, in honour of Christmas, this oft-recurring pig festival has been thrice repeated, and you can fancy how saturated with grease are the unfortunate mats near the door! I have induced the owner of the wooden tray which did duty both on this day and on Christmas Eve, to sell it to me, and shall take it away as an interesting memorial of the strangest Christmas dinner which has yet fallen to my share.

We had also a novel Christmas Eve, marked not by the bringing in of a cheery Yule log, but by multitudinous marriages; for one result of the murrain of measles which desolated the isles a few months ago is that a matrimonial fever has set in. The widows and widowers, instructed by their chiefs, have interpreted some expressions of the great white chief as a recommendation to seek mutual consolation, and the infection spreads among all classes of the community, old and young. So it happened that on reaching this place, Nirukuruku, three days ago, we found no less than forty couples, belonging to this and the neighbouring villages, all waiting to be married on the arrival of the missionary, preferring his good offices to those of Aquilla, the native minister, just as a damsel nearer home might deem the knot more satisfactorily tied by her bishop than by the village curate. I cannot say, however, that these weddings gained much in pomp of ceremonial by the arrival of the great man; for, knowing the amount of inquiry involved by each marriage, and how very slow a process this might prove, it was deemed necessary to begin at once, so as to dispose of as many as possible without loss of time.

All belonging to the village were therefore invited to present themselves as soon as possible; so, just as we had finished supper (sitting on our mats, and by the light of one dim candle, in a lantern) all the couples arrived. Being dark, and the call so sudden, few of the women had thought it necessary to put on the short low-bodied article which acts the part of jacket, but were dressed just like the men, with only a short white kilt (*sulu* they call it); and very difficult it was, in the dim light, to tell which were which, and to get them rightly paired, and arranged along one side of the room; for, as a matter of course, the bashful couple arrive and depart separately, and would rather place themselves beside any one in the room than their own intended! Altogether, it was a very curious scene.

Near us sat the native minister's wife and family, diligently sewing Christmas raiment, by the light of a wick and oil in an old sardine-box, with the coaxiest of large-eyed brown babies looking on admiringly. Beyond, a group of brown boatmen lay round the fire, which, as usual, blazed in a sunken corner of the floor—no chimney of course. Some houses have several such fireplaces, merely enclosed by logs of cocoa-palm; and it certainly is a marvel that fires are not more frequent, especially as the candles, which are only bits of blazing bamboo, are carried about in the most careless way over the mats; and these are laid over a deep layer of soft dry grass.

When inquiry as to statistics began, it was found that a considerable number of the couples were old hands—that is to say, they were recent converts, who, having renounced polygamy, were about to settle down in sober double harness, instead of the four-in-hand (at the very least) of previous matrimonial arrangements. The age and extreme ugliness of some of these brides suggested great constancy in their lords, and greater attractions in the ladies than mere personal beauty. The discarded wives invariably seem in great demand, as under the old system of polygamy a large proportion of the men were doomed to involuntary celibacy; the emancipated women have therefore no difficulty in selecting new homes, wherein they may hold undivided sway—an honour which may perhaps scarcely prove a source of unmingled satisfaction, considering the amount of hard work which falls to the lot of a Fijian wife, in fishing, and other necessary labour, which the lords of creation prefer generally to do by deputy, though he is accounted a sorry idler who sends his wife to dig in the distant yam-garden. The position of women in these isles has hitherto been as low, and their lot as hard, as in most other uncivilised lands; but Christian teachers are now doing their utmost to raise them in the social scale, and with considerable success—their bright intelligent faces telling, in many instances, how readily they will do their own share in improving their condition when once such a possibility has dawned on their minds.

Some of the brides and bridegrooms retained their old original names, which, literally translated, are characteristic; those of the women being such as Spray of the Coral-reef, Queen of Parrot's Land, Queen of Strangers, Smooth Water, Wife of the Morning Star, Paradise, Mother of her Grandchildren, Ten Whale's Teeth (*i.e.*, very precious).

Some were cruelly ill named from their birth. To any one who

has suffered from the sting of a Fijian nettle such a name as Lady Nettle seems rather a cruel one to bestow on a little innocent. Nor can Waning Moon, Drinker of Blood, or Mother of Cockroaches be considered flattering, though Mother of Pigeons sounds more kindly. Earthen Vessel is more complimentary than might at first sight appear, when we consider the preciousness of the water therein stored; while Waited for, Smooth Water, Sacred Cavern, One who Quiets, are all more or less pleasant.

The men's names are equally fanciful. Such are The Stone God, Great Shark, Bad Earth, Bad Stranger, New Child, More Dead Man's Flesh, Abode of Treachery, Not Quite Cooked, Die out of Doors, Empty, Fire in the Bush, Spark of Fire, Day, Night, The Great Fowl, Quick as Lightning, Laggard, Imp, Eats like a God, King of Gluttony, Ill Cooked, Dead Man, Revenge, Carpenter,—and so *ad infinitum*.

Where Christian names have been adopted at baptism they are almost invariably Scriptural names Fijianised, I had almost said Italianised. Such are *Taivita* for David, Lydiana or Litia for Lydia, Mirama for Miriam, Nabooco for Nebuchadnezzar, Setavenie for Stephen, Zacheusa, Bartolomeo, Luki, Joeli, Amosi, Clementi, Solomoni, Jacopi, Josephi, Isaia, and Epeli, the latter representing Abel. In short, in any large assemblage you could scarcely fail to find namesakes of all the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, with their mothers and wives, the Scriptures having been ransacked from beginning to end to afford sufficient variety. Some few modern names are heard, such as Alisi and Arietta, and occasionally the surname of some revered white man has been adopted, the prefix of Mr being especially insisted on!

The preliminary inquiries respecting the happy couples, and the difficulty of ascertaining whether parents and guardians had, in some cases, given the necessary consent, took up so much time, that at last, wearied with the day's journey, I could stand it no longer, but crept inside my tent (the old green plaid which has been the faithful companion of so many wanderings), and fell asleep to the sound of the old story, "Till death us do part," oft repeated in Fijian tongue.

The giving of a ring forms no part of the wedding service—indeed in this land of few personal ornaments even a tortoise-shell ring is a rare treasure. Plain circles cut out of pearly shell form bracelets for men, and equally common is a circle cut from a cocoanut and polished. The men also have a monopoly of the necklaces made of large whale's teeth, and handsome breast-plates of pearl-

shell and ivory, beautifully inlaid and polished; also of the large curly boar's tusks, which form so becoming a neck-ornament.

The feminine jewel-case is far more limited. It probably consists of one pink shell, tied on with a plait of sinnet, and English beads (only very tiny beads, which can be plaited into the finest patterns, find favour here). Sometimes a piece of carved whale's tooth is worn as an ear-ring, or a string of dog's teeth as a necklace,—and this pretty nearly exhausts the catalogue.

Nor was the amount of raiment worn in heathen days oppressive. A thick fringe of coloured grass, or hybiscus fibre, from three to four inches in length, was the full dress of a young lady in the mountains,—indeed is so to this day among the tribes who have not yet adopted Christianity, or who, since the scourge of measles, have returned to heathenism. Most Christians, men and women alike, now wear a cloth reaching from the waist to the knee, and over this such decoration as fancy prompts—whether gay fringe of coloured grass, delicate creeping ferns, or bright golden croton-leaves, cunningly fastened so as to overlap one another, and form a close short petticoat,—and a very becoming dress it is, especially when worn by a group of pretty girls, perhaps standing beneath the shadow of a plantain-tree, or holding one of its broad leaves above their heads, to shield them from the burning rays of the sun, the rich tones of their brown figures standing out in strong relief against the vivid blue of the sky.

How long the wedding ceremonials were protracted I cannot say, but when I awoke the following morning I learnt that nineteen more couples were waiting their turn; and again the slow process of inquiries had to be gone through, which occupied three hours. At eleven we started in the canoe, and floated down the river to Nivotheene, a very pretty moated village, tastefully laid out, with neat paths. It is a new village built on an old site, the young chief and his people of the Nathau tribe having returned to heathenism during the wars, when their old town was burnt by Thakombau's people, since which time they have lived twelve miles farther up the river for security. Now they have again embraced the *lotu*, and come down from the mountains. But the tribe with whom we are now staying (at Nirukuruku) were formerly their bitter foes, and the under-current of distrust is still strong; and from various indications, both Mr and Mrs Langham feel so far suspicious of possible danger that they have yielded to the strongly urged advice of the native minister, and have decided to give up our visit to the inland town, as being unsafe. It would be foolish to get clubbed

in a savage fray. It was at no great distance from this place that the Rev. Thomas Baker and seven Christian natives were treacherously murdered by the heathen tribe of Na-vosa in the year 1867 (only eight years ago). They were all eaten. It is worthy of note that at least half-a-dozen different villages have pretended to be in possession of Mr Baker's head—a case of multiplication of relics worthy of medieval days. The moat and ditch which enclose Nivotheene and so many other villages tell of the state of terrible insecurity of life and property in which these tribes have hitherto lived, but which, we would fain hope, has now become a story of the past.

We lunched under a group of lovely trees, veiled with long trails of creepers, falling some thirty feet in wreaths of tender green, through which we looked down on the clear beautiful river, and to the mountains beyond. Afterwards we adjourned to the house of the young chief, and made friends with his pretty wife, whose bright intelligent smile almost made us forget the hideous fact that lines and curves of dark blue tattooing did their utmost to destroy the beauty of her mouth. In some districts this disfiguring honour is the portion of every married woman; in others it is reserved for mothers. There is also some tattooing of the body; but this, even in heathen undress, is invariably covered by the short *liku*, the four-inch deep fringe—and of course Christian usage discourages such painful adornment, which in the Fijian group has been always considered exclusively feminine. In the Tongan group, on the contrary, only the men indulge in it.

As soon as our arrival became known, the villagers crowded in to inspect us, and to exchange sundry necklaces of whales' teeth and carved wooden bowls for fathoms of cloth and much-coveted big knives. I bought from the villanous-looking old priest a couple of large wooden spoons, or scoops, made purposely for human broth; and we also got sundry cannibal forks, of carved wood, with four long prongs, which were used exclusively for human flesh, this being the only meat which might not be touched with the fingers, because it was supposed to produce a skin disease.

Wishing to ascertain the truth of an assertion sometimes made, to the effect that women were not allowed to share in these cannibal feasts, we asked the young chief whether it was so. He denied it emphatically, adding, "I'd like to see the woman who would not eat her full share!" We then asked whether the manner of preparing human flesh was not different from that in which pork, for instance, was cooked. He misunderstood the ques-

tion, and answered, "Oh! there's no comparison between them—human flesh is so much the best!" Doubtless he has had good experience, having from his childhood been engaged in tribal wars, which afforded a rarely failing supply of dead foes. On every side of us fierce battles have been fought; and on a hill at the head of the valley stands Balavu, "the long town," which, in 1871, was surprised by neighbouring tribes, who therein *slew and ate* 260 persons! When they had finished eating them all they proceeded to eat the pigs!

No less than three of our boatmen have lost their parents in these wars, and pointed out to us the spots where they had respectively been clubbed; one also pointed out the grave beside which (only two or three years ago) he had watched for ten nights and days, to be sure that his father's body was not dug up and eaten. Even then it was scarcely secure, as bodies have been dug up after twelve days, at which stage (in the tropics!), as they could not be lifted whole, they were made into puddings! One favourite phase of cold-blooded revenge and insult was to collect the bones of bodies thus eaten and reduce them to powder. Then, when peace was restored, and the tribes next feasted together, this nice ingredient was added to some favourite pudding. Afterwards, should war again break out, it was the height of triumph to taunt the late guests with having eaten the dishonoured bones of their kindred. Yet the people who could plan and execute such deeds as these were so punctilious in some respects that it would have been considered the grossest breach of Fijian etiquette to take an enemy unawares: even in the case of a besieged town, formal notice must be sent to the foe that an assault was about to be made; it might then be delayed for many days, but the intimation must be sent, that the foe might be on their guard. Nevertheless tales of gross treachery prove that this chivalrous law was not always carried out.

Another hideous act of revenge—one among many—was perpetrated near this spot. A chief had one daughter, of rare beauty, whom he loved dearly. The foes who could not conquer him in battle contrived to waylay her, as she came down to the river to fish. They carried her back to their village in the mountains, and there made a great feast of her dainty flesh, giving part of it to the pigs, as the grossest insult they could invent. Then her bones were scattered before the doors of the houses, that all comers might constantly walk over them and spit upon them.

Is it not hard to realise that such deeds as these can so recently have been committed by the gentle friendly people among whom

we now travel so safely, and whose child-like earnestness and devotion to the new religion of peace and love is so striking?

Nothing is to me more difficult than to reconcile this mixture of utter heartlessness and indifference to the anguish of others, with the high-bred refined courtesy which seems so perfectly natural, not only to the chiefs, but to all these people. I can only account for it by considering how many British children have delighted in pulling off flies' legs and wings, who, nevertheless, when they attained years of discretion, have turned out excellent members of the Humane Society. But then these people have always hitherto possessed both characteristics simultaneously, and it is only since they have become Christian that they have ceased to be cruel.

Horrible as these stories are, they are mere trifles compared with many which are known to be facts, but which are utterly tales of the past wherever the *lotu* has spread. I am sure that in all England you have had no congregation more devout than that which assembled here at dawn this morning.

We returned from Nivotheene late yesterday evening in a drizzling rain, and found a great company waiting to present a roast pig in a large wooden dish; and another party had brought us puddings all the way from Nundiokar. So we spent Christmas Eve feasting!

This morning—Christmas Day—the village was early astir, and soon after six the beating of the *lalis* summoned us to morning service. The *lalis* are the Fijian substitute for bells: a solid block of wood, six or eight feet in length, is hollowed out, like a canoe, and when struck with two sticks produces a deep reverberating tone, which is heard at an immense distance. Most villages have two of these lying side by side, and when struck by skilful players they are capable of producing an immense variety of notes. So you see we had Christmas chimes even in Fiji.

The church was large, but not large enough for the congregation and the doors were, as usual in this district, so low that I had to stoop double to enter. With no window overhead the atmosphere may be imagined, though something has been done in the way of a simple system of ventilation, by passing a number of hollow bamboos through the roof, of course at such an angle as not to let rain enter. Unfortunately the whole congregation seemed afflicted with severe coughs and colds, and as yet it has not occurred to any charitable people at home to send out a ship-load of pocket-handkerchiefs for the poor Fijians. I heartily wished on this occasion that some one had done so.

In these mountain districts the intense heat of the day is often succeeded at night by the rising of a dense mist, which lies in the valleys like a quiet lake, and steals into the houses, chilling the sleepers, few of whom own any warm covering to counteract the sudden change of temperature, which, consequently, is very trying indeed; and coughs and snuffles are almost as common as in a British community.

I observe that the act of sneezing here, as in most other lands, calls forth a kindly greeting. Here the familiar "Viva," or "Bless you," takes the form of *Mbula!* "May you live!" or "Health to you!" to which the sneezer replies, *Mole*, "Thanks;" in former days custom required him to add, "May you club some one!" or "May your wife have twins!"[1]

The ideas of distance, as described in miles, is vague indeed. Hearing of a native service to be held in a neighbouring valley, said to be only about two miles above the village where we had halted on the previous day, Mr Langham started after breakfast, intending to preach there. Knowing the valley to be of exceeding beauty, I purposed accompanying him, but some hints of the difficulty of the path happily made me change my purpose; knowing full well the extreme fatigue of even a short walk on these steep hill-paths, slipping and sliding in deep clay, a task not to be lightly undertaken beneath a burning noonday sun. It was evening ere the walkers returned, having never reached the village at all; for when, after two hours of hard exercise, crossing the stream thirteen times, and following a path so steep that it was suggestive of climbing up and down a well-soaped wall, they were told that they were about half-way, they deemed it well to give up the attempt, and so called a halt, resting awhile at a deserted village ere retracing the difficult way.

From the hints Mr L. had received from some of the people, he deemed it advisable to carry a good revolver; for he mistrusted the young chief, and was rather startled when the latter was suddenly joined by four men carrying loaded muskets, and one with a heavy club, which seemed an unnecessary adjunct to attending a peaceful Christmas service. Whether there might have been real danger had they proceeded, it is impossible to say. As it was, no harm befell.

In the course of the walk Mr Langham discovered that food was very scarce with these people, and that our friends of yesterday

[1] In Northern China I find the same greeting, "*Ypaisui!*" "May you live a thousand years!"

were sorely put to it for a Christmas dinner. Great was their satisfaction on being invited to send a canoe to bring back a share of what had been presented to our party; some of whom, however, could ill conceal their disgust at being called upon to resign so delicious a morsel as roast pig, to these hereditary foes. The practical working of the Christmas message of peace on earth and goodwill towards men, as exemplified by the privilege of feeding a hungering enemy, was one which they could not realise quite so quickly. Thus ends our Christmas Day in the heart of Viti Levu. And now it is high time to creep into my green plaid tent and sleep—so good night, and many a merry Christmas to you all!

This house is beautifully clean, and wonderfully comfortable considering all things. It is the home of Aquilla, the native minister, who has a very nice neat wife, and four pretty little girls, including the nicest baby I have seen in Fiji. This afternoon little Mary was my sole companion on a long walk over steep hills, following a narrow path through the tall reeds, till we came to the place of graves (*ai mbulu mbulu*). We found a flat hill-top cleared, with the graves in the centre, overshadowed by one noble old tree. The view was magnificent. The Fijians invariably select a beautiful spot wherein to lay their dead, and also one difficult of access, and well concealed, pointing to the hideous dangers of cannibal days.

I daresay you wonder if my dreams are not haunted by all the horrible stories I hear of those old days. Happily they are not; indeed the only thought that abides in my mind is of thankful wonder at a change which seems almost miraculous, so gentle and courteous are these people who, the last thing at night, and the first thing in the morning, slip quietly into the house, and kneel reverently while prayers are offered, invariably ending with the familiar blessing, which now falls on my ear as naturally as if uttered in our mother tongue:—

"A loloma ni noda Turaga ko Jisu Karisito, kei na loloma ni Kalou ko Tamada, kei na veilomani ni Yalo Tabu me tiko vei keda kieega ogo ka tawa mudu. Emeni."

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen."

You must not forget to sound an *n* before the letters *d*, *g*, and *q*, and an *m* before *b*—thus: no*n*da—Tura*n*ga—Tama*n*da—Yalo Ta*m*bu—ke*n*da—o*n*go—mu*n*du.

Now once more good night, and peaceful be your slumbers.

P.S.—In case you wish to say the Lord's Prayer in Fijian, here it is:—

"Our Father.

"Tama i keimami mai loma lagi, me vakavokovoko taki na yacamu, me yaco mai na nomu lewa, me caka na nomu veitalia e vura vura me vaka mai loma lagi. Solia mai vei keimami e na siga ogo nakakana e yaga vei keimami.

"Kakua ni cudru vei keimami e na vuku ni neimami vala vala ca me vaka keimami sa sega ni cudru vei ira sa vala vala ca vei keimami.

"Kakua ni kauti keimami ki na vere, ia mai na ca ga mo ni vaka bulai keimami; ni sa nomu na lewa kei na kaukauwa kei na vakarokoroko e sega ni oti. Emeni."

The foregoing version of the Lord's Prayer is that in general use. The version used by the Lotu Katolika—*i.e.*, the Roman Catholic Church—is as follows:—

"Tama i keimami, ni sa tiko mai loma lagi, me tabu raki na yaca muni; me yaco mai na nomuni lewa; me ia na loma muni e vura vura me vaka mai loma lagi.

"Ni solia mai kivei keimami edai dai na keimani kakana ni vei siga; mo ni vaka le cale cava mai na neimamii vala vala ca me vaka keimami sa vaka le cale cava na nodra ko ira e rai vala vala ei kivei keimami; ni kakua ni laivi keimami e nai vaka caba caba; mo ni vaka bulai keimami mai na ca. Amene."

CHAPTER XII.

QUITE ALONE IN A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE — RETURN TO REWA — BASALTIC PILLARS—REWA POTTERY—BAU—NEW YEAR'S EVE—KING THAKOMBAU AS AN ELDER OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH—PRE-CHRISTIAN TIMES.

NAKAMEROUSI, *Monday, Dec.* 27.

DEAREST NELL,—I must begin a letter to you to-night, for the strangeness of the situation exceeds any I have yet happened on. I have left the Langhams at Nirukuruku, and am here quite by myself, very much at home in a Fijian hut, and surrounded by natives, most of whom were, till within the last two years, uncom-

promising cannibals, and who, moreover, have never before beheld the face of a white woman!

The way it came about was this. When we were going up the river in hot haste, and with no time to loiter by the way, the village of Nakamerousi had attracted my especial admiration. It is perched on a steep bank, and looks right along a broad reach of the river to a beautiful mountain-range. Being anxious to secure a sketch from that point, it was agreed that I should take advantage of the return thither of Reuben, the native teacher, who, with the help of Joshua, one of the boatmen, accordingly paddled me down in a small canoe. Great was the astonishment of the villagers, and still greater that of Reuben's exceedingly fat wife, in whose house I am spending the night. We made great friends, though I could hardly utter a word of Fijian, and probably few of those around me had ever heard a word of English.

As seen from outside, this house promised well, but on entering I perceived that the first effort of civilisation had not improved the ordinary home. For the teachers have been encouraged to show the advantages of a separate sleeping-room, by having a third of the house screened off with a reed partition, but so little do they appreciate the innovation that they generally convert the inner room into a store-room for yams or lumber. So it is in this case. However, the kind fat old lady resigned the post of honour for my benefit, and here I have hung up my plaid-curtain and mosquito-net, thereby greatly interesting a crowd of spectators, who had previously watched the wonderful process of consuming chocolate and biscuits. One kind woman has brought water in a bamboo, and therewith filled my big brass basin (the old companion of my happy tent-life in the Himalayas).

Now a party of laughing brown children are holding up small torches of blazing bamboo, by the light of which I am writing; but the illumination seems to me so likely to end in a general blaze that I will not be responsible for it. And so good night. The girls are greatly delighted with my hair-brushes, especially my tooth-brush. I shall have to keep jealous guard lest they experiment with it! They themselves use wooden combs, sometimes ornamented with coloured string and beads.

Really these falling sparks are too dangerous. Good night again.

NAVOUNINDRALA, *Dec.* 28.

Here we are back at the junction of the two streams, on which we have spent so strangely interesting a fortnight. Our voyage in the canoe is over, and we are once more on the main stream, at the point where we left the boat.

I began this letter to you at beautiful Nakamerousi. As soon as possible I disappeared within my shawl-tent, and then commenced the family supper, followed by much smoking, in which the young ladies joined freely. At last I could stand it no longer, and begged them to desist, which they did forthwith with the utmost courtesy. A few minutes later all present joined in family prayers, then the house was cleared, and only Mrs Reuben and her small boys remained with me.

On the following morning I with much difficulty escaped from the infliction of a great feast which the kind villagers had prepared for me, by contriving to make them understand that they should reserve it for the mission party. The mountains were magnificently clear, and I secured a satisfactory sketch ere the rest of the party arrived. Of course the people crowded round to inspect this new and extraordinary method of *writing the mountains* in many colours; but they were most courteous and quiet, and as usual my only cause of complaint was their vile habit of incessantly spitting. From the first day that I commenced sketching in Fiji I discovered that here, as with most other semi-civilised races, white as well as coloured, the first sentence it was necessary to learn was a request to abstain from this noxious practice in my immediate neighbourhood!

Now we are back in Ratu Richard's nice tidy house, which to-day is like a botanical show; for on the way up I gave some children small silver coins for bringing me fronds of a lovely fern with ripe seed (which I enclose for Eisa), and also for other curious plants; so the whole population have been ransacking the bush, and have brought us many rare flowers. I never before saw so many in Fiji. But I fear the poor people are sorely disappointed that I do not want to buy them all. I have, however, just bought a very fine necklace of whale's teeth, which I hope to show you some day. What a sensation it would make at a Northern Meeting Ball!

Bau, *New Year's Eve.*

Nothing special occurred on our return journey. We called at the houses of several white men, and received most cordial welcome, and many cups of tea with milk, which after our long abstinence seemed true nectar. How strange it did seem once more to sit on chairs and at tables! I fear I rather regret giving up mat-life!

We spent a pleasant day at Rewa with Mr and Mrs Webb, exchanging the news of the mountains for that of the great outer world, and did not we enjoy a civilised breakfast!

Rewa is a large village of the invariable thatched houses, with an unusually fine thatched church, round which have been set up a series of rude stone pillars, some pentagonal,—which are supposed to have been brought from the basaltic cliffs at Khandavu, the outermost isle of the group. I noted a similar pillar among the ruins of the heathen temple at Bau; and here, at Rewa, Mr Webb has happily replaced several which formerly surrounded a large barrow where three chiefs are buried, and which some ruthless hand had overthrown. Mr Webb kindly took me all over the place, and showed me every point of interest.

The town of Rewa consists of a cluster of villages, inhabited by various divisions of tribes, all subject to a central power. Each village is embosomed in luxuriant gardens of broad-leaved banana and tall sugar-cane, and we passed from one to another by tidy paths, bordered with ornamental shrubs, denoting unusual care.

Here, as in our own land, the fisher town stands quite apart from the homes of the agricultural population, and intermarriage is equally rare. Thither we wended our way, in search of the curious pottery made by the very low caste women of the fisher tribe. We had not the luck to catch the potters at work, but from each little cottage specimens were brought to us, very varied in form, and of a greenish-red earthenware, glazed. Many of the forms are most artistic, the commonest consisting of a cluster of vases resembling a bunch of oranges, sometimes as many as six, all joined together by one handle. I grieve that their extreme fragility should allow so small a chance of many specimens reaching England in safety. However, I have ordered a good many to be made. I had the good fortune to secure several really old pieces in the mountains—finely shaped bowls and water-jars—and these have travelled so far without damage.

In the afternoon we continued our voyage down one of the

ISLES OF OVALAU, MOTURIKI, BAU AND VIWA.
FROM VITI LEVU.

p. 111.

many branches into which the river here divides, entering the sea by many mouths, which are in fact salt-water creeks, winding through the dense mangrove-forest. We called at Navouloa, the training college for native students, now in charge of Mr Waterhouse.

Thence a few hours' sail brought us here to Bau, the native capital. It is a tiny island, lying close to the great isle of Viti Levu, with which indeed it is connected by a low neck of land, which is fordable at low tide. Small as it is, it holds a very important place in the estimation of a Fijian, being the home of the great chief Thakombau and all his family, and of nobles before whom the tribes of other districts bow in humblest deference, and to whom they grant special privileges. Its chief takes precedence of all other chiefs; and the mere fact of belonging to Bau gives a man a definite position. Moreover, the language of Bau is to the isles of Fiji as the Latin tongue is to the civilised world—the one language which all are bound to understand, however different may be that of each country.

The town has great historic interest, but what with the ravages of fire and the pulling down of all the old temples (whose high-pitched roofs formerly gave some character to the town), it now possesses no architectural features whatever—the house of Thakombau, the ex-king (or, as he prefers to be called by his hereditary title, the Vuni Valu, or Root of War), being as simple a thatched cottage as any other round the beach. So this regal town consists only of a cluster of cottages on the water-level, overshadowed by several large trees. Each member of the royal family has his or her own house. There is the king's house and the queen's house, the king's kitchen (which I think is rather larger than either), and the homes of their sons.

The mission-station at Bau occupies the flat summit of the green hill which composes the island, and is a good illustration of how differently men estimate things. According to our views it is by far the best site on the island, but the missionaries were only allowed to build there because no native cared to leave the water-level, and the summit of the hillock was the receptacle for all the rubbish and filth of the town, and was, consequently, so undesirable a place of residence, that only the policy of securing a footing in the actual capital induced the mission to accept this site. But it was Hobson's choice,—that or none.

It must have been indeed a hateful home in those days, when you could not look down from the windows to the town below

without witnessing scenes of unspeakable horror, the very thought of which is appalling; when the soil was saturated with blood, and the ovens were never cool, by reason of the multitude of human victims continually brought to replenish them.

Now the site of the ovens is marked only by greener grass; but an old tree close by is covered, branch and stem, with notches, each one of which is the record of some poor wretch whose skull was dashed against a stone at the temple, the foundations of which are still to be seen a few steps further on. The tree is the sole survivor of a sacred grove, which, like that at Rewa, was cut down on account of the superstitious reverence in which it was held, and the dark memories attaching to it. Beside it is the well, where the bodies were brought to be washed, just below the mission wicket.

Here, too, are the great wooden drums, which in those evil days only sounded a doom of death, or summoned the people to some scene of horrible revelry, but which now beat only to call them to Christian worship, or to summon them to school; and near the drums and the ovens the walls of a stone church are slowly rising.

Very different, too, is the scene on the hill-top, where roses and jessamines now perfume the air around a pleasant home—while on one side cluster the mission buildings, where the students are fed and taught; and beautiful is the panorama of sea and isles which lies outstretched on two sides of the horizon, while on the other lie the near shores and distant mountains of Viti Levu.

Great was the excitement of the juvenile population of this tiny isle when we arrived late last night, and each little urchin was trusted to carry some of our quaint treasures up the hill, and deposit them in the verandah, which really looked very much like a timber-yard when we looked out next morning! Such an *omnium gatherum* of wooden pillows and clubs, spears and bowls, wooden trays and sticks, to say nothing of sundry pieces of pottery, and a pile of savage finery!

The first to welcome us on landing was the native minister, Joeli Mbulu, a fine old Tongan chief. His features are beautiful, his colour clear olive, and he has grey hair and a long silky grey beard. He is just my ideal of what Abraham must have been, and would be worth a fortune to an artist as a patriarchal study.

All the people are preparing for their New Year feast to-morrow, and have been all day coming up in crowds to consult Mrs Langham about their clothes and other matters.

10 P.M.—I must write a few words just to prove that I am thinking of you all on this last night of the old year. *You* are just about finishing breakfast. *We* are just starting for the midnight service, which on this night (Watch-night the Wesleyans call it) is held in every church all over these isles. I shall wish you a glad New Year at the right moment.

First Sunday in 1876.—I left off to go to the midnight service. It was a very impressive scene, though the church having recently been blown down in a hurricane, and the large house for strangers which was next used having been burnt in a recent fire and the new one not being finished, the congregation have to meet in two smaller buildings.

Churches here are just like the houses on a very large scale. They are on a raised foundation of stones for drainage, and are all built of trees and reeds, with high roof, thatched, and walls thickly coated outside with dry leaves. Of course they burn very readily. The pillars and rafters are often decorated with beautiful patterns in sinnet-work—that is, coloured string made of cocoa-nut fibre woven into elaborate patterns.

On New Year's Eve the churches are beautifully decorated with green leaves; and exquisitely made wreaths and necklaces of berries, alternating with bunches of tiny leaves and flowers, hang all about the lamps. They are very pretty, but of oppressive scent. At the midnight service two of the native teachers gave short addresses, and as the clock struck twelve there was a short interval for silent prayer. Then the Vuni Valu, the fine old ex-king, prayed, as a beginning of the New Year. They tell me his prayers are generally very striking and very touching.

After service we all stood for a while in the bright starlight, exchanging New Year greetings, while the children indulged in noisily beating the *lalis*, the big wooden drums, and (alas for British importations!) rattling old tin cases! and so making night hideous. This New Year festival is an anniversary of purely English origin, the native method of marking seasons being simply by the yam crops.

Thakombau is a very fine old man, stately and chief-like in his bearing, and with clear, penetrating eyes. It certainly was strange to hear the first words of prayer uttered in the New Year flowing from *his* lips, concerning whose youth and manhood we had heard such appalling tales—tales, moreover, which we knew to be undoubtedly true, beginning with that early feat of his childhood,

when at the tender age of six, the young Seru, as he was then called, clubbed his first victim, a boy somewhat his senior.

The first fifty years of his life were passed in wars and fightings, and disgraced by unspeakable barbarities, including the strangling of his father's five wives, after the death of that old miscreant. But while still a determined heathen, he was not altogether unfriendly to the missionaries, whose remonstrances he would often endure, while rejecting their counsels. Their teaching was strongly supported by his wife, Andi Lytia, and his daughter Andi Arietta Kuilla (Lady Harriet Flag). The latter is a woman of masculine intellect, who rules her own district splendidly, and is the king's best adviser. Like many another, however, Thakombau turned a deaf ear to all their arguments so long as his way was prosperous. It was not till 1854, when one tribe after another had thrown off his yoke, and his fame as a warrior was dimmed, that he began to lose faith in his own gods, and to listen with a more favourable ear to the counsels of the Christian King George of Tonga, who sent him a letter urging him also to become a worshipper of the Saviour.

Like King David of old, in his heaviness of heart he thought upon God, and determined to join the *lotu;* and on the 30th of April he gave orders that the great drums (which ten days previously had been beaten to call the people to the temples for a great cannibal feast) should now sound to summon them to assemble in the great strangers' house to worship the true God. About three hundred there met, and the Vuni Valu, with all his wives, children, and other relatives, knelt together in solemn adoration of the Christian's God. Mr Calvert and Mr Waterhouse conducted the service. This was a day for which they had long worked and prayed, hoping against hope—a day ever to be remembered as one of the most important in the annals of Fiji.

But the outward state of matters was very unsatisfactory. Thakombau's implacable foe, the chief of Rewa, had acquired great power, and announced his intention of utterly destroying Bau and its king and people, whom he would soon eat; and proclaimed that he defied their new God Jehovah to save them. At the same time he had the courtesy to send a message to Mr Waterhouse to beg him and his family to leave the town before he set it on fire. At such a time it certainly needed both faith and courage to stick to his post, but both Mr Waterhouse and his devoted wife determined to hold their ground, greatly to the satisfaction of the king. Then followed a period of dire anxiety. There were fears within

the isle, and fightings without — fears of treachery from hostile tribes living even on the little isle itself.

But at the darkest hour came deliverance. The King of Rewa died of dysentery. His chiefs received Thakombau's overtures of peace favourably. King George of Tonga came to Fiji, and somehow, unintentionally, drifted into the general war and helped to bring it to a speedy end. Seventy towns returned to their allegiance to Bau, and great was the wonder excited by the king's clemency; his whole aim being to secure a lasting peace, and to induce all concerned to attend to the cultivation of the land and the interests of trade.

All this time he had been carefully studying the doctrines of the faith he professed; but in his case, as in many others, it was deemed desirable to defer his baptism for a considerable period, till his instructors were convinced of his being thoroughly in earnest. It is a point on which the mission has always insisted strongly, that every convert should continue for a long period on probation, and receive careful individual training before being admitted to baptism. It was not till January 1857 that, having dismissed all his wives except one, Thakombau was publicly married to Andi Lytia, and they were baptised together.

From that moment he has taken no retrograde step. Always resolute in whatever line of conduct he adopted, he has shown himself most truly so in the promotion of Christianity, and of every measure that promised to be for the good of his people. Determined and energetic in his relations to other chiefs, he has of late years thrown all his influence on behalf of peace and order, and now professes himself well content with the subordinate position he has accepted, believing that he has thereby consulted the best interests of all his countrymen.

His eldest son, Ratu Abel, cannot look so placidly on the resignation of his birthright, and holds himself somewhat aloof from the foreign rulers. His half-brothers, Ratu Timothy and Ratu Joe, are more cordial, and, moreover, talk very good English. They are fine handsome fellows, and inherit something of their father's stately carriage; indeed all the chiefs are distinguishable from the common herd by their dignity and grace of movement, the lack of which among some of the commoners is due, doubtless, to the fact that no Fijian dare stand upright in the presence of a superior: if at rest he must crouch before him (in no case presuming to pass behind him), or if in motion, must either crawl on all-fours or walk bending lowly. Even Thakombau's own sons scarcely

venture to stand upright before him. Naturally such a custom, continuing from generation to generation, becomes second nature.

At early dawn on New Year's morning I went out, the better to enjoy the loveliness of the scene, the soft balmy air, the dreamy beauty of the far-away isles, and the wondrous calm of the wide waters. I sat on a grassy hillock and watched the sun rise from the sea, reflected in dazzling light. Below me lay the peaceful village, where it seemed none were yet astir.

I was leaning against a rude wooden pillar which marks the grave of Tanoa, Thakombau's aged father, who to the last continued a vicious and obstinate cannibal. Nothing delighted him more than to return from tributary isles with the bodies of infants hanging from the yard-arms of his canoe, as tribute exacted from their parents! Horrible beyond description are the stories of his brutalities. I may just tell you one as a sample of many.

One of his near kinsmen had offended him, and knowing how little pity he had to expect, sought by every means in his power to mollify him, humbly imploring his forgiveness. But the fiend responded by cutting off his arm at the elbow, and drinking the warm blood as it flowed. Then he cooked the arm, and ate it in presence of the sufferer, who afterwards was cut to pieces, limb by limb, while the brutal chief sat watching and gloating over the dying agonies of the miserable victim. Afterwards he sentenced his own youngest son to death, and compelled an elder brother to club him.

When the time of his own death drew near—I think it was in the year 1852—he gave special injunctions that his wives should on no account fail to accompany him to the spirit-world. Two English missionaries—Mr Calvert and Mr Watsford, who had for years vainly striven to convert this atrocious old heathen—now exerted their whole influence to try and persuade Thakombau to refrain from carrying out his father's wicked will. These felt that success in this matter would be an earnest of wavering from heathendom on the part of the king. So Mr Calvert offered a princely gift of whale's teeth, and even to have his own finger cut off (Vaka Viti—*i.e.*, Fiji fashion), if only the lives of the women might be spared; but to no purpose. Mr Watsford offered twenty muskets, the mission whale-boat, and all his own personal property; but all in vain. Thakombau had just assumed the title of Tui Viti—King of Viti—and felt that his dignity would suffer by the omission of any customary ceremony. It is the privilege of an eldest son first to strangle his own mother, and then to assist in

performing the same kind office for the other widows. So the five ladies were dressed with all pomp, and placed the new cords round their necks as proudly as though they had been precious ornaments; and Thakombau himself assisted the men whose office it was to strangle his mother and the four other women. Out of deference to the white men's prayer, he offered life to one victim; but she refused it,—not from any love to her cruel lord, but simply because it was the custom of Fiji.

So here they all lie side by side, on the green hillock overlooking the broad blue Pacific and the isles where the name of Tanoa was once so sorely dreaded.

I turned back to the peaceful, pleasant mission-home, and lingered in the fragrant garden, looking across to Viwa, where the early missionaries established themselves before gaining a footing in Bau. Brave women were the wives of those men; and in many a scene of horror, and many a peril, did they prove themselves helps-meet for the men of earnest purpose whose lot they shared. I will give you one instance of the part they took here in those awful days—not remote days either; for the story I will tell you happened just thirty years ago.

A piratical tribe, called the Mbutoni, had brought a large offering of their spoil as tribute to the old king, Tanoa. Custom required that a feast of human flesh should be prepared for them, but the larder was empty, and no prisoners of war could be obtained. Under these circumstances, it was the duty of Ngavindi, the chief of the *lasakau*, or fishermen, to provide victims. Two young men were accordingly entrapped; but these not being deemed sufficient, the wary fisher went forth with his men. They ran their canoes among the mangrove-bushes, and covered either end with green boughs, and then lay in wait. Soon a company of fourteen women came down to fish. They were seized and bound, and carried off to Bau to furnish a feast for the morrow. News of this reached Viwa, where Mrs Calvert and Mrs Lyth were living alone with their children, their husbands having gone to teach on another island. They determined to make an attempt to save the lives of their luckless sisters; so having induced a friendly native to take them across in his canoe, they started on their errand of mercy. As they neared the shore it was evident that the cannibals were in a state of frantic excitement: the death-drums were booming, muskets firing, in token of rejoicing; and then piercing shrieks rose above the wild din, and told that the horrid butchery had begun. It needed desperate courage for these two lone (and apparently

unprotected) women to land on the isle and face that blood-thirsty rabble. But with resolute courage and unfailing faith they pressed on.

On the beach they were met by a Christian chief, who led them through the crowd to Tanoa's house, which it was death for any woman to enter. But unheeding their own safety, they forced their way in, with a whale's tooth in each hand, as the customary offering when making a petition. The old man was so amazed at their courage, that he commanded that such as still lived should be spared; and a messenger was despatched to see that the order was obeyed. Nine had already perished; but five survived, and were set at liberty, blessing their brave deliverers, who, not satisfied with having gained their object so far, went straight to the house of Ngavindi, the chief butcher, who was sitting in full dress, rejoicing in his work. They spoke to him earnestly on the subject, and had the satisfaction of seeing that his chief wife and that of Thakombau cordially seconded their words. A few days later, H.M.S. Havannah touched the isles, and Captain Erskine went to Viwa to call at the mission. They had just sat down to tea, and he had just been delicately hinting his belief that many of the missionary stories about these nice well-conducted people were grossly exaggerated, when Ngavindi came in to ask Mrs Lyth about the great English ship. He was most kindly received, and took his place at table with perfect ease. Captain Erskine described him as a very handsome, prepossessing young fellow, of modest and gentle manners. He could scarcely believe that he had just been chief actor in this horrid business. Not long after this, Ngavindi was slain in battle, when attempting to carry off a dead body. One of his wives was sister to Thakombau, whose duty it now was to strangle her; but the tribe petitioned that her life might be spared, that her unborn child might become their chief. So the old mother offered herself as a substitute, and the king strangled her with his own hand—a hand which had already cut off the nose of one sister, as a punishment for being unfaithful to her husband.[1] So Nga-

[1] These are tales of the past. We must now look nearer home to find such barbarity. In the long series of atrocities which, within the last few months, have distressed Ireland (the shooting of landlords and burning of property), one incident has forcibly reminded me of pre-Christian days in Fiji, when a poor fellow having been put in charge of a house from which the tenant had been evicted, five or six men in masks entered the house, seized him and nailed him to the door by his ears, which they then cut off. And among the trifling incidents of daily life, we hear of ladies and clergymen being pelted with large stones, and pursued for long distances, solely for having ventured to examine the Protestant schools. Whether do you consider Ireland or Fiji the safer place of residence in this year of grace 1880?

vindi lay in state on a raised platform, with one dead wife at his side, and the corpse of his mother at his feet, and an attendant close by; and all were laid together in one grave.

The day after Captain Erskine had made acquaintance with the gentle, courteous Ngavindi, he came to Bau, where he saw the bloody stone on which the heads of multitudes of victims had been dashed, when presented to the god at the chief temple. The Mbutoni guests were still in the stranger's house, and to prove how well they had been received, they pointed out four or five large ovens in which the nine women had been cooked; and also the spot where a few months previously, after the capture of Lokia, a town belonging to Rewa, eighty corpses of those slain in battle had been heaped up, previous to being apportioned to the greedy warriors.

But in a greater or less degree this was the ever-recurring story, and the days of joy and rejoicing for men, women, and little children, were those on which canoes arrived bringing *bokola*, which were thrown into the sea and ignominiously dragged ashore with shouts of joy, and made the occasion for wild orgies and mad dances of death.

It was only people who had been killed that were considered good for food. Those who died a natural death were never eaten, —invariably buried. But it certainly is a wonder that the isles were not altogether depopulated, owing to the number who were killed. Thus in Namena, in the year 1851, fifty bodies were cooked for one feast. And when the men of Bau were at war with Verata, they carried off 260 bodies, seventeen of which were piled on a canoe and sent to Rewa, where they were received with wild joy, dragged about the town, and subjected to every species of indignity ere they finally reached the ovens. Then, too, just think of the number of lives sacrificed in a country where infanticide was a recognised institution, and where widows were strangled as a matter of course! Why, on one occasion, when there had been a horrible massacre of Namena people at Viwa, and upwards of one hundred fishermen had been murdered and their bodies carried as *bokola* to the ovens at Bau, no less than eighty women were strangled to do honour to the dead, and the corpses lay strewn in every direction round the mission station! It is just thirty years since the Rev. John Watsford, writing from here, describes how twenty-eight victims had been seized in one day while fishing. They were brought here alive, and only stunned when they were put into the ovens. Some of the miserable creatures attempted to escape from the scorching bed of red-hot stones, but only to be

driven back and buried in that living tomb, whence they were taken a few hours later to feast their barbarous captors. He adds, that probably more human beings were eaten on this little isle of Bau than anywhere else in Fiji. It is very hard indeed to realise that the peaceful village on which I am now looking has really been the scene of such horrors as these, and that many of the gentle, kindly people round me have actually taken part in them.

Before we had finished breakfast, we had a New Year's morning visit from the old king's daughter, Andi Arietta Kuilla, accompanied by her beautiful youngest boy, little Timothy. She has two other children, Ratu Beny (Benjamin) and a little girl rejoicing in the name of Jane Emilia. We walked back with her to her father's house, at the foot of this hill, and found her mother, Andi Lytia, the old queen, suffering from a very severe cough. She was lying on her mats beside a central fireplace (*i.e.*, a square hollow in the floor). She wore only a long waist-cloth, a style of dress which displayed her ample proportions to the utmost, and being so huge, she did strike one as being rather undraped! But no one thinks anything about it, so I suppose it is only prejudice. Happily both these immense ladies are strikingly handsome, with massive features and clever heads, which have been proved to contain good brains.

Their home, like those of their neighbours, is simply a large room strewn with mats, on which the family and their guests recline. The king's own house stands apart, but he reserves a corner here, which is shut off by a heavy curtain of native cloth; and one uncomfortable-looking chair revealed his wish to conform to foreign customs. He thought it necessary to sit on this when I first entered the house, but soon sacrificed dignity to comfort, and reclined on his mat, while his family squatted round him.

A large number of lamps attracted my attention, as did also two neck-pillows, each formed of a joint of the largest bamboo I have ever seen, measuring $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. It had drifted ashore from some unknown isle, and been brought to the Vuni Valu as a rare prize. It is certainly a curiosity, but not quite one's idea of a comfortable pillow for a weary head. A Fijian pillow, however, is merely a neck-rest; the head still supports itself as it was taught to do in those days of the elaborate hair-dressing, on which the chiefs prided themselves so greatly that each considered it necessary to have his especial barber, whose joy and delight it was to adorn the head of his master with curls and twists and plaits, more numerous and more wonderful than those of any other chief.

It was strangely suggestive of a stormy past to hear the old king, who was eager for particulars of our expedition up the Rewa, constantly asking Mr Langham to explain exactly where the different towns were of which we spoke. Then I found that neither he nor his daughter (whose own district is actually on the Rewa) had ever even heard of these towns; while as to seeing them, no tribe *ever* saw anything beyond their own property unless they went as invaders in time of war. I showed Andi Kuilla sketches of places within a day's march of her own property, but she had never seen any of them.

Another suggestive thought is awakened when, on shaking the hand so cordially offered by these comely ladies, we are conscious of the absence of at least one finger. By such sacrifice the women of Fiji (like those of Tahiti and Hawaii) have hitherto shown their mourning for the dead, or made their appeal to the gods to save the sick. So you rarely meet a woman above middle age who has not lost one or both her little fingers. The operation is performed with a sharp shell, with which the mourner saws the first joint till she cuts it off. On the next occasion of mourning, she sacrifices the second joint. The little finger of the other hand supplies a third and fourth proof of sorrow. After this, the Fijian equivalent of wearing crape is to rub the poor mutilated stumps on rough stones till they bleed.

I have been in sole possession of the house all the morning, every other creature being at church, notwithstanding a thermometer at about 90°, which decided my remaining on the hill-top in a fresher atmosphere than that of the crowded church. But I am going this afternoon to accompany Mr Langham, who holds service at a pretty village on the big isle, some way up a lovely river, so I may as well close this letter, ready for to-morrow's mail.

CHAPTER XIII.

A STRANGE VOLCANIC ISLE—JOELI MBULU, A TONGAN APOSTLE—THE CONVERSION OF THE PEOPLE OF ONO—THAKOMBAU'S CANOE—A ROYAL GARDENER—A SMALL HURRICANE—EARLY PRAYERS—BREAKFAST ON THANGALEI—BETWEEN THE BREAKERS—AT HOME AT NASOVA.

NASOVA, *January* 14, 1876.

DEAREST NELL,—You see I have got safely home from my travels in the wilds, and I am bound to confess that there is a

good deal to be said in favour of the comforts of civilisation, however strongly my gipsy instincts do at times assert themselves! I must tell you, however, of several delightful expeditions we made from Mrs Langham's charming home at Bau. The first was to the neighbouring isle of Viwa, which was one of the early mission stations, and is now the home of Mr Lindsay, who has charge of a large district, extending to the mountains of Viti Levu. It was a pretty picture to see his two very fair delicate little girls in charge of a little Fijian maiden scarcely bigger than themselves. After a very pleasant afternoon we returned home by clear moonlight—a lovely walk through the forest was followed by a calm row across the bay. But a very common difficulty awaited us on reaching the shore. The tide was low; the boat lay far out, I think nearly a quarter of a mile, and the accepted way to reach it was to submit to be carried like monstrous dolls by one, sometimes by two, strong natives. However, nothing seems strange when you are used to it. It is only one's first experience of anything which is startling.

The two families agreed to devote the next day to exploring two small islands, visible from both homes, but which, being uninhabited, had never yet invited nearer inspection. You know I always say it is my mission in life to stir up my friends in all corners of the globe to take me to see places of interest close to their own homes, but never before visited by themselves. So next morning we all met at the small isle of Tomberrua, which is an ancient place of burial. Many old chiefs lie beneath the cocoa-palms, but their graves are all uncared for and overgrown. The lovely white sand tempted us to bathe in the warm sunny sea—a rare pleasure, for there are so few places tolerably safe from sharks.

We then rowed to the other isle, Manbualau, which proved to be the most extraordinary specimen of volcanic formation I have ever seen; all one vast honeycomb of hard cutting rock, with deep fissures intervening between ridges so close together that you can step from one to the other. The rock is veiled with rank vegetation, which adds to the danger and difficulty of the scramble; and innumerable bats haunt the great Mbaka trees (a sort of Fijian banyan), which overshadow the whole, their countless interlacing stems finding a holding-ground in every crevice of the rock. It is an exceedingly curious place, utterly unlike anything I know elsewhere.

I walked across the isle to the other side with the gentlemen but it was difficult to make our way, and the smell of bats was

positively sickening; so we were glad to hurry back and join the rest of the party, who had kindled a fire and prepared a cheerful tea in our absence.

The next few days slipped pleasantly by. I sketched various points of interest, such as the great Mbaka trees near the old king's house, the foundations of the great temple, and the stone on which the victims' heads were dashed (which is a basaltic pillar from Khandavu).

I went several times with Mrs Langham to see the noble old Tongan minister, Joeli Mbulu, whose wife, Echesa, is very unwell; such a nice, lady-like old woman, so kindly and so sensible. They belong to that fine race of Tongans who were, in fact, the earliest missionaries in these isles; for so soon as they themselves had embraced the new faith (as preached by the Wesleyan teachers in the Friendly Isles) they endeavoured to spread it wherever they journeyed; and as they had frequent intercourse with some parts of Fiji, it was not long before the Tongan sailors taught all they had learned to such of their own kinsmen as had already colonised here, and to such Fijians as could be induced to hear them. It was the moving tale of awful horrors told by these men, and the encouragement afforded by the sowing of that first seed, that induced the Rev. W. Cross and the Rev. David Cargill to leave the comparative comfort of their homes in Tonga to come and establish the mission in Fiji, where they landed in October 1835, at Lakemba, the principal island in a group at least 200 miles from here, where a considerable number of Tongans had already settled. These men proved invaluable helpers. Better pioneers could not have been desired. Men of strong energetic character and determination, keenly intelligent, physically superior to the average Fijian, and therefore commanding their respect, they had always taken the lead wherever they went; and as in their heathen days they had been foremost in reckless evil, they now threw their whole influence into the scale of good. Having an independent position of their own, and considerable power, they were able at once to establish all outward observances of religion, without fear of hindrance from the chiefs. And so something of the nature of Christianity was made known more rapidly and more widely than it could have been by any other means. Of course this is not literally true of all the Tongans in the colony. There were many who, although they professed the new faith, continued as proud and haughty as ever, making themselves hated and feared as of yore; but the majority proved themselves truly in earnest, and

many became most devoted teachers, ready to go forth to any distant point where there might be a chance of doing good.

Foremost amongst these was Joeli Mbulu, a man whose faith is evidently an intense reality. I have rarely met any man so perfectly simple, or so unmistakably in earnest. He proved himself so thoroughly worthy of confidence that in due time he was ordained as a native minister, and sent to take charge of the remote cluster of isles, of which Ono is the principal. This little group lies about 150 miles south-east of Lakemba, to which it was tributary, and is the southernmost part of Fiji. The story of its early groping from its own deep darkness to the light, is so strange and touching, that I must tell you something about it. It was truly the story of

> "An infant crying for the light,
> And with no language but a cry."

In the year 1835, just before the first white missionaries came to Fiji, many events conspired to depress these poor people. An unusual number had been slain in their incessant wars, when an epidemic disease broke out which carried off many more. The survivors, much alarmed, thronged the temples of their gods, bringing large offerings of food, and such things as they possessed, and all rites of worship were diligently observed, but to no purpose.

Just then a chief named Wai returned from Lakemba, where he had met a Fijian chief called Takei, who had been in the Friendly Islands, and had learnt something about Christianity. It amounted to little more than that there was but one God, whom all must serve continually, and that one day in seven was to be devoted to His worship. It was but a faint glimmer of light, but they determined to act on it. So on the sixth day they prepared their food for the seventh, on the morning of which they dressed, as for a festival, and assembled to worship this unknown God. But here a difficulty arose, as to how to set about it. In their dilemma they sent for the heathen priest, whose god they were now forsaking, and requested him to officiate for them. This he did, to the best of his power, offering a short and simple prayer for the blessing of the Christian's God, but intimating that he himself was merely spokesman for his neighbours, being himself a worshipper of another God!

This was the first act of Christian worship in the far-away isle of Ono. A great longing now arose for fuller knowledge of the truth; so when a whaling ship chanced to touch here for provisions

on her way to Tonga, a passage was engaged on board of her for two men who were sent as messengers to ask for a teacher. But several months elapsed ere an answer could reach them, and meanwhile Christianity was spreading at Lakemba, and many Tongan converts (whose chief attraction to Fiji had been the wildly licentious life which they might there lead without let or hindrance), now decided to return to their own homes. A canoe-load of these started from Lakemba in May 1836, but were driven by contrary winds to the isle of Vatoa (the Turtle), about fifty miles from Ono. Here they heard of what had happened there, and one of their number (who at his baptism had taken the name of Josiah, and who had acted as their chaplain during the voyage), determined to go to Ono and teach the people all he knew. Great was their joy at his coming, and day by day he thenceforth led their devotions. Soon they built a chapel, which would hold 100 persons. All this was done ere the messengers from Tonga returned to tell that white teachers had gone to Lakemba, and that to them they must apply for help. Another long delay.

But meanwhile the desired teacher was being trained all unknown to them. One of their own islanders, a wild Ono lad, had contrived to wander all the way to Tonga, and you can fancy that several hundred miles in an open canoe is no easy journey, especially when every isle to which you may unintentionally drift is inhabited by fierce cannibals of unfriendly tribes. An ordinary canoe is a very unsafe vessel in a storm, and in heathen days shipwreck invariably meant death; for even should the crew reach the land in safety, and find themselves on shores which, under ordinary circumstances, would be friendly, they were declared to have salt water in their eyes, and were doomed to death and the oven. But the lad in question reached Tonga in safety, and there he found the people earnestly conforming to the new faith. He attended their services, learnt much, and on returning to Lakemba became truly converted, and for several years lived a consistent Christian life, taking the name of Isaac Ravuata. He soon learnt to read and write well, and acquired so much knowledge that he became a useful assistant in the mission. When, therefore, the message from Ono reached Lakemba, it was evident that he was the right man for the work; he was accordingly despatched, and gladly was he welcomed by his countrymen. He found that 120 persons had given up idolatry, and were thirsting for further knowledge of the Christian faith.

The following year a Tongan teacher was sent to assist him; by

this time three chapels had been built, and so anxious were the converts for instruction, that the Christian crew of the canoe said they had scarcely been allowed needful sleep, so eager were the people to learn all that they possibly could teach them. They found that the little isle of Vatoa had also become *lotu*, and all these people prayed that they might be visited by a white missionary who might administer the sacraments. It seemed hard to refuse such a prayer, but labourers were few and the work was vast. Mr Calvert and his wife were left quite alone at Lakemba, where Tui Nayau, the king, and most of his chiefs and people, continued heathen, and often antagonistic. Fifteen years elapsed before the king determined to accept the *lotu*. As far as possible, Mr Calvert travelled about this group of twenty isles, teaching the people, and now this further claim on time and strength seemed beyond his power. It was a long and dangerous journey to undertake in a frail canoe, and involved an absence certainly of weeks, possibly of months; and the thought of leaving his wife utterly alone in the midst of ferocious cannibals was altogether appalling. At this crisis it was she—a most gentle and loving woman—who came to his help, and urged him to go. Still there was the difficulty of getting a canoe sufficiently seaworthy for such a long and dangerous voyage. However, not long afterwards, a Tongan chief came to Lakemba in a large canoe, and consented to take Mr Calvert to Ono. There he found that a wonderful and cheering work had been accomplished, and that a large proportion of the people were living genuine Christian lives, thoroughly blameless. Of these he baptised upwards of two hundred, and married sixty-six couples, and by his encouragement and presence greatly cheered the little body of converts. It was not to be supposed that this movement had progressed without serious opposition from many of the heathen inhabitants, and many events occurred at this time, stranger than any fiction.

Amongst other incidents, there was the baptism of Tovo, the beautiful daughter of the chief of Ono. She had become a devoted Christian, and delighted in doing all the good in her power, visiting the sick and teaching in the schools. But in infancy she had been betrothed to the old heathen king of Lakemba, who now claimed her to be his thirtieth wife. She resolutely refused to fulfil this heathen betrothal, her father and all the Christian chiefs fully supporting her. On returning to Lakemba, Mr Calvert learnt that the old king had fitted out a fleet of eleven canoes, manned with warriors, and intended going himself to seize his bride. He

went to him, bearing the customary whale's tooth as a peace-offering, and besought him to refrain from this marauding expedition; but finding his words were to no purpose, he solemnly warned him that in fighting against these people, he was fighting against the Almighty, whose care they had invoked. The king, nothing daunted, set sail, and reached the Christian isle of Vatoa, where he cruelly ill-treated the people, wantonly destroying their food and property. There he remained several days, waiting for a fair breeze; but he despatched four canoes with a hundred piratical warriors, to await him at Ono. These canoes were never heard of again. When the fair wind sprang up he started in person, but though he actually sighted Ono, the wind shifted, and he was blown far away to leeward. The breeze freshened; the canoes and all on board were in imminent danger. Almost by miracle they escaped and returned to Lakemba, when the king sent to Mr Calvert the feast which, in his hour of danger, he had vowed to his gods, and prayed that his words of warning might never follow him again. He expressed his willingness to accept the customary gift of property, in lieu of the young woman, that she might be free to marry any other man. However, before it arrived, he had again changed his purpose and kept the offerings, but still demanded the damsel. Nevertheless he did not venture to return to claim her, so she was left in peace and in the enjoyment of single blessedness, as no other suitor dared to come forward, the king not having relinquished his claim.

Meanwhile the heathen people of Ono had done all in their power to persecute their Christian neighbours, who kept the peace as long as possible, but finally were driven to fighting. A civil war lasted for several weeks, which resulted in the complete defeat of the heathen. To their utter amazement, and contrary to all Fijian precedent, their lives were spared, and they were all freely pardoned, a course which naturally inclined them to respect the religion which taught such mercy. Consequently when, in 1842, Mr Williams visited Ono, he found that out of the 500 inhabitants only three persons were still nominally heathen, and these became Christians ere long. He baptised 200 persons, who had been waiting and longing for his coming. Portions of the New Testament and the morning service from the Book of Common Prayer were now printed in the Ono dialect, and eagerly sought by the people; and three years later, when Mr Calvert touched at the isle, he found all the population in a condition of religious fervour which filled him with thankfulness and amazement: the people

were so intensely in earnest, and, on the whole, so calm and sensible. It was like a story of the early days of the Church—so wonderful was the flood of light and love that had been poured on these men and women, in answer to their exceeding longing to know the way of truth, and their whole-hearted acceptance of it. Some notes of their prayers and mutual exhortations, as spoken at the "love-feasts," have been recorded, and, like many others which have been translated to me at different places, breathe such intensity of Christian love and devotion, as we are accustomed to look for only in the lives of great saints. They so rejoice in the radiance of this newly found Light, that they suppose it must flood the whole world on which it has once shone; while we, conscious of the dim grey faith which most prevails beneath our dim grey skies, are more inclined to echo Keble's sad words—

> "And of our scholars let us learn
> Our own forgotten lore!"

Many of the Ono men now desired to be allowed to go as teachers to other parts of Fiji (of course in peril of their lives). Of these, eight were selected, and in the simple prayer with which that meeting closed, the Tongan teacher, Silas Faone, exclaimed—"They go; we stay on this small isle according to Thy will. *We would all go, Thou knowest*, to make known the good tidings." At the close of morning service 300 communicants knelt together at the Holy Communion; and on the following morning all the people assembled on the beach, and again knelt in prayer for blessings on the teaching of the eight first missionaries sent forth by the little lonely isle to preach the Gospel of Christ to the vicious cannibal tribes throughout the group.

Urgently did these people desire the presence of a resident clergyman amongst themselves, and for some time the Society endeavoured so to arrange their districts as to comply with their wish; but as there were only six white missionaries to work in the eighty inhabited isles, it was found impossible to continue this. And thus it was that Joeli Mbulu came to be sent to Ono as a fully ordained minister; and zealously and efficiently did he work there, until more urgent need for his presence elsewhere compelled his removal to another district.

It seems to be one of the most serious difficulties in the organising of all this great work, that excellent as are many of the native teachers, so small a number are found fit to undertake the responsibilities of higher work, such as the arrangement and control of an

infant church. They always require the direct guidance of the missionary, and if this is long withheld, difficulties almost invariably arise. Such a noble exception as dear old Joeli is rare indeed.

In the last few days I have also made great friends with the Vuni Valu and Andi Lytia, and some of her pretty attendants. I fancy the latter are remarkable pickles, and up to any amount of mischief in a quiet way, but in awesome terror of the old lady, as also of her daughter. Not that the morality encouraged by these is altogether in accordance with the views professed in civilised countries, especially as regards certain feudal rights of the chiefs; and we occasionally hear of little episodes in other parts of the group which prove that the old nature is not wholly eradicated, and that some of these courteous high-born dames are capable, under the influence of jealousy, of such diabolical actions as I dare not even hint at. Instances like these are, however, happily rare, and we must not expect absolute perfection to be a fruit of such very rapid growth. I am not quite sure that, if our police reports are to be credited, we have attained to it even in London, after so many centuries of all civilising and Christianising influences.

Thakombau was in great wrath when we arrived, because a damsel who is his ward had married the chief of Rewa without his sanction. In old days there would have been fierce war in consequence. Now, however, he is gradually subsiding, and is much interested about the Fijian mission to New Britain. He proposes going himself in his yacht to look up the teachers, and take them stores of mats and water-jars; and he invites Mr Langham to accompany him, but of course this will not come off. He told us of his amazement on beholding so vast a city as Sydney. He said it gave him some idea of what heaven must be! We said we wished he could see London and Westminster Abbey. He replied that he could well imagine that the city of which Sydney was but an offshoot must indeed be of surpassing grandeur. Would he come to London? No; he feared to die at sea and be thrown overboard. But we had run that risk to see his isles, and here we were safe. Oh, it was only his age that deterred him; his son might perhaps go. While we were sitting with him, his niece arrived in a canoe, bringing her own mats and several loaves of bread. She sat down silently in a corner; no greeting passed, but her attendant mentioned the object of her visit, and the old couple took no further notice of her.

One of the objects of interest in Bau is a very large canoe which

Thakombau is building for himself, and which will carry a hundred persons, and much baggage. You can imagine that making such a canoe as this, with such rude tools as these people possessed formerly, was indeed a triumph of shipbuilding. First, there is the keel, made of several pieces of timber strongly joined; then the sides have to be built up without ribs, but they are closely fitted, and caulked with native cloth and a sort of pitch made from the bread-fruit tree; then the pieces are strongly sewed together with sinnet (which is string made of cocoa-nut fibre); a large platform is built over the middle of the canoe, and on this is a deck-house. The whole is balanced by a heavy log of wood attached to one side as an outrigger. Some large canoes are double—two are placed side by side, and the platform connects them. There are holes in the deck through which the sculling-oars are worked, and the helm is a great steer-oar about twenty feet long with a blade about eighteen inches wide. It can be worked from either end of the boat; and the one great sail is also dragged from end to end with infinite labour, so that at every tack bow and stern change parts. Such a canoe flying before the wind, and throwing up a fountain of white foam as it rushes through the water, is a very beautiful object, and one which I am never weary of watching. But there are many canoes which dare not approach Bau in this brave style, but have to lower their sail while yet a great way off, and scull humbly to the shore. If the canoes come from Somosomo (Taviuni) the scullers dare not even stand, but must squat in token of lowliest humility, shouting the *tama* (obeisance) from time to time.

In olden days the building of such a canoe as this would have entailed a whole series of cannibal feasts. First, as rejoicing when the keel was laid down; then feasts for the carpenters as each portion was completed; then living rollers to facilitate launching the canoe—and these, of course, were cooked and eaten; next, the deck of the canoe must be washed with blood; and finally, a great feast must be provided on the occasion of first taking down the mast. Sometimes as many as fifteen men were sacrificed for such a banquet. If a new canoe was brought to Bau which had not received its due baptism of blood, the chiefs would attack a neighbouring town to secure victims, that its reproach might be taken away!

No fear of any such horrors now. The building of the great canoe progresses slowly, for workmen are now scarce; but the old king sits for hours watching it with pleasure, and then, taking advantage of the low tide, he tucks up his drapery of *tappa*, and

wades almost knee-deep through the shallow water to the muddy shore of the main island, where he goes to work with his own hands in his yam-gardens,—chiefly to set a good example of honest labour to his people.

Last Sunday Mr Langham took me to see another village, where he was to hold service. The morning was lovely—a dead calm and oppressive stillness. We had scarcely got home when the sky darkened, and it began to pour. Rain was much wanted for the yam crop, but this was decidedly in excess. We were to have started for Levuka at daybreak the following morning, but deemed it prudent to defer, as it was evident foul weather was approaching. The students went to the main isle to cut mangroves with which to bind the thatch, and make such preparations as they could. Darker and darker grew the sky, heavy grey clouds closed all round the horizon, hiding even the nearest isles. Then down came the rain—such a downpour as I have rarely seen, even in the tropics. Soon the wind rose in fitful gusts, howling and moaning. It increased steadily till it was actually a small hurricane.[1] Not such an awful one as they sometimes have even here, and not nearly so bad as a West Indian one, but by far the worst I have ever seen. It blew furiously all night, and one marvelled how any trees stood it—the palms were tossed about like mad things. Of course every blossom in the garden was gone. Even inside the coral-reef the sea was thundering in great crested waves. In the middle of the night the roof of my room began to leak so freely, that we thought the whole thatch would blow off, so Mr Langham rang a great bell, and all the young men, students at the mission,

[1] We happily escaped any severe hurricane during the two years I remained in the group; but the following extract from the 'Times' tells of a storm at the close of 1879 which proves that the oft-told stories of devastation and ruin which at last we heard almost incredulously, were only too true. The labours of years were all swept away in a few hours, and crops of every sort totally destroyed.

"CYCLONE IN THE PACIFIC.—A storm in December did very great damage in Fiji. The banana plantations were laid level with the ground. At Naida a tidal wave went two miles into the bush, sweeping away and destroying everything before it. The cutter Alarm was washed up into the bush. The Byron, cutter, foundered at Nunda Point, and the owner, Mr M'Pherson, and one Fijian were drowned. Among the drowned was also J. B. Grundy, manager to Mr William Bailey. S. L. P. Winter and two Fijians were lost in a half-decked boat at Bau. Two natives were drowned and every house blown down at Radmarre and Madroch. The whole country is described as denuded of timber, and the native food crops destroyed. Her Majesty's ship Emerald, which had on board Sir Arthur Gordon and suite, *en route* for Rototumah, encountered a cyclone off that island, but managed to weather it safely. The Stanley, of Que nsland, 113 tons register, caught the full force of the late gale. She had 150 islanders on board for Fiji, who were kept under battened hatches for thirty hours at a time. Fifty subsequently died, and one committed suicide on being discharged from Levuka Hospital. Ten more deaths were expected."

came up and swarmed over the roof and bound it with planks and long mangrove wands.

In the morning the storm partially subsided, and as soon as any one could stand, the king's fat handsome daughter came up herself to get some milk for his breakfast. Her simple attire consisted of a bath-towel worn round the waist and a pocket-handkerchief tied across the capacious bosom, below the arms! The king *has* a cow of his own, but rarely contrives to get any milk; so he generally sends up to the Langhams for either a jug of milk or of ready-made tea with bread and butter!

By evening the weather was quite settled, and there was a great calm; so, as Mr Langham had business to do in Levuka, he decided to start next morning. He kindly chartered a canoe to carry my precious collection of clubs, spears, and bowls; it started at midnight, and at 3.30 A.M. Mrs L. came herself to call me. She gave us a comfortable breakfast by lamp-light. Then the boatmen, according to invariable custom, came in to *lotu* (family prayers), and with the first glimmer of dawn we started down the green hill, and found dear old Joeli waiting to speed us on our way. What a contrast to a cheerless start for the train on a January morning in England!

We sailed before sunrise, and about 9 A.M. reached a pretty small island called Thangalei, where we breakfasted under the shadow of a magnificent Mbaka tree, whose many-pillared stem formed a large enclosure, which some very utilitarian person had converted into a pig-sty!

We started again as soon as possible, but there was no wind all day, and rowing a heavy boat is slow work, and so it came to pass that we missed the tide and could not get inside the reef at the passage. We therefore had to row outside in the open sea, keeping at a safe distance from the great, grand, awful breakers which fell with such appalling force and thunderous roar on the massive coral barrier, tossing vast volumes of white spray high in mid-air, and concealing from us all the land except the mountain-tops. It was very unpleasant, for though the sea was calm, it had not quite forgotten its recent battle with the winds, and heaved in great swelling rollers, which would have swept us on to the reef had not the men pulled hard. At last we came to a very narrow passage, by which we entered the calm shallow water; but it was an anxious moment, for there was only just room for the boat to pass, and as the huge walls of green water towered up on either side and fell in cataracts of foam, it seemed as though they must swallow us up.

The men pulled steadily and strong, but it was an intense relief when we glided safely into the peaceful blue water of that quiet haven, and an hour later reached the pier at Nasova, where I found all the party reassembled. They had come back from Suva in H.M.S. Nymphe, with Captain Grant Suttie, just before the gale on Monday night.

Great was the excitement of unpacking my canoe-load of curiosities; for we are each trying who can make the very best collection—Sir Arthur, Mr Gordon, Captain Knollys, Mr Maudslay, Baron von Hügel, and myself. Our daily delight is to ransack the stores in Levuka, where the natives may have bartered old things for new, and great is the triumph of whoever succeeds in capturing some new form of bowl or quaint bit of carving. All our rooms are like museums, adorned with savage implements, and draped with native cloth of beautifully rich patterns, all hand-painted. The house has made great progress in our absence. The large new drawing-room, built entirely of wood, is really a very fine room, and has two large bow-windows, besides the usual multitude of glass doors opening on to the verandah. The garden, too, begins to reward Abbey's care, and looks quite bright; and he is diligently striving to make a small lawn, which, however, is very difficult work. You really would say so if you saw the labour-boys patiently snipping the grass with old scissors!

I have just been doing a round of visits to my especial friends, Mrs Havelock, Mrs Macgregor, Mrs D. Ricci, and the Layards. It seems as if I had been away for months; it is so pleasant coming back to such cordial welcome from them all. Captain Havelock took me to call on Mr Leefe, who is in Levuka for surgical treatment, his hand having been lacerated in a fibre-crushing machine. It was fearful agony, and he must have had a dreadful journey coming here by himself. It was impossible for his wife to accompany him, as all their live stock would inevitably have been left to die of neglect in her absence.

Yesterday another of the Engineers died (his wife and children are on their way from England). This morning at sunrise the military funeral marched sadly past this house, with the Union-jack for a pall, and a party of sailors from H.M.S. Nymphe, with fife and drum. Several men fell out, overcome by the heat, which is simply grilling.

Some officers from an American man-of-war have just come to call, so I may as well close this letter.—Your loving sister.

CHAPTER XIV.

LIFE AT NASOVA—FARMYARD—CONVICT THATCHERS—NATIVE FESTIVAL AT BAU—RETURN TO NASOVA—BATTLES WITH CRABS—BEGINNING OF CANNIBAL DISTURBANCE—FIJIAN FAIRIES—A STORM.

NASOVA, FIJI, *March* 1, 1876.

DEAR AUNT EMMA,—I have not yet written once direct to you, but I trust you nevertheless consider yourself bound to write to me; for you cannot realise how greatly we prize all home letters out here, and how we do watch for the mails. We have been so watching now for upwards of a week, the mail being long overdue, and a hundred times a-day we look up to see if no faint line of smoke on the horizon tells of its approach; and when it does come in with a whole month's European news, can you not fancy what an anxious minute the opening of the mail-bag is? If only people at home could realise the delight their letters are to wanderers in far lands, I think they would surely write more regularly.

I wish I could look in at you all, just for a good chat, but I should wish to carry with me a flood of sunshine, and this calm blessed sea, for I fear London is hardly as pretty to-day as Fiji; and whatever disadvantages this place possesses, it certainly has no lack of beauty. At present, however, it is terribly isolated—a small steamer to New Zealand being our only direct communication with the outer world, the Australian boats having deliberately dropped us, declaring that we don't pay! However, for the last three months the great steamers running between San Francisco, New Zealand, and Australia have touched at Khandavu, our outermost isle, bringing and taking mails and passengers; but they are fighting hard to get off doing so, and only do it at all because their agent signed a contract which they find they cannot at present legally break.

March 7.—I began this letter a week ago, when we were waiting and watching for the mail. At last, when we were beginning to fear our little steamer had gone to the bottom, she returned with a few Australian letters, but the aggravating steamer from San Francisco never touched Khandavu at all; so all our English letters and papers have gone to New Zealand, and we shall not see them for six weeks. So much for being a poor colony, which cannot afford to build proper lighthouses. And poor it is with a vengeance.

You cannot imagine anything more so. The whole white community are only just above starvation-point, and yet everything is very expensive.

I cannot give you a better proof of the general poverty than the fact that scarcely any one in Levuka (the capital) owns a boat—the only other means of locomotion being to tramp on weary feet along the vilest of shingly footpaths. Even the officials — the Colonial Secretary and Auditor-General—have none. The Judge (Sir William Hackett) and the Attorney-General (Mr de Ricci) have a rickety old tub between them, which they either pull themselves, or man with two labour-boys, each great arm of the law supplying one! Of course the Governor has his own boat, in which Lady Gordon goes for a small row two or three times a-week; but it takes six of the native police to man it, and they are not always available. Moreover, it is such a good boat that there are very few places where it can ever be allowed to touch; and above all, it must keep a very respectful distance from the beautiful coral-reefs and patches, which are to me the chief delight of this place. I always envy the native women, who are for ever playing, and fishing, and finding wonderful treasures on the reef, but here the whites do not understand the interest of such pursuits. So my enjoyment of the reef consists in looking down on it from the hill above us, and lovely indeed it is.

Just behind the house is a steep glen, with a rocky wee burn, overhung with good large trees, and these are matted with ferns and creepers. It is not a very fine piece of tropical scenery, but it is my own, in the sense that no one else ever takes the trouble to climb up. So there are few days that I do not scramble up to some pleasant perch among the grey boulders, whence I can look down through the fringe and frame of green leaves to the lovely blue sea, with the band of rainbow light that marks the coral-reef. I am writing there just now, in a cleft between two great rocks, and right glad to escape from the sound of many voices down at the house. For one of the aggravations of house-building out here (as in tropical countries generally) is, that to improve ventilation, the partitions between rooms always stop short of the ceiling. Consequently every word spoken in one is heard in all the others, to the great aggravation of the unwilling listener. How the gentlemen can concentrate their minds sufficiently to write business letters in their very noisy quarters, with people of all colours perpetually coming and going, is to me a standing mystery; and the annoyance is further aggravated by the fact that, in these one-

storeyed houses, all rooms must of course be on the ground-floor, and all windows are shutterless glass doors, opening on to a public verandah; and you have to choose between sitting with several doors wide open to all comers, or stifling for lack of air by closing them. Certainly no one in Fiji can say that his house or his room is his castle, where he may rest undisturbed. I think, of all delights of a British house, there is none which we all shall henceforth prize more thankfully than the privilege of sitting at our own windows up stairs with closed doors. I am bound to say, however, that I am far better off than any one else in the house in this respect, having a very cosy nest in the new wing. But being next the nursery, the system of open roof makes the rooms virtually one; and though the two children, Jack and Nevil, are the very dearest and best of little chicks, and their Welsh nurse and Portuguese nursery-maid are likewise excellent, it does sometimes suggest itself that silence would be preferable. So then I creep up my glen and have an hour or two, with only the blue and gold lizards as companions.

Happily in Fiji we have really no noxious creatures except mosquitoes (and they do swarm). But the houses are full of cockroaches, which eat everything—boots, shoes, clothes, &c.—and what they spare the mildew destroys. My drawing-paper is already spoilt, and our dresses and boots are green with mildew every morning. So are our collections of spears, clubs, and bowls, which require daily rubbing with oil. Another foe is a lovely white cockatoo, which has a special fancy for eating the best table-cloths and the gentlemen's dress-clothes! We have a good many parrots about the place, more or less tame, which will come and perch on the tea-cups, upsetting more than they drink; and there are tame kingfishers, which eat the cockroaches (in which useful art they are assisted by huge spiders, which we love and cherish). A pair of laughing-jackasses walk about the apology for a garden, and jeer at everything; and sometimes they and the pigeons come into the drawing-room, and have to be driven out; and all farm-yard creatures, carefully reared by Abbey since our arrival, roam about on every side,—cows, sheep, turkeys, geese, and fowls; and don't they all cackle and gobble! You see there is so very little available ground for anything here on this rocky island, that everything is huddled up into no space at all. A very pet dog, with her puppies of two generations, complete the family.

We are getting tolerably cosy at last; but it has been a slow process,—and it is little more than a month since we were able to

take possession of the three new rooms which Sir Arthur has added to the old house—namely, a large drawing-room, a nursery, and bedroom, which last was built for Lady Gordon; but as she prefers remaining in the old house, it falls to my share. It is a simple wooden house; but so expensive is every detail of work here, that I believe it has cost Sir Arthur upwards of £1000; and as he refunds more than a third of his nominal salary as Governor to this wellnigh empty treasury, it follows that the post is by no means a lucrative one. Our new rooms are very nice; but in the wish to make the building less hideous than other houses here, Sir Arthur indulged in gable-ends, which, we are told, will probably result in our being left roofless the night of the first hurricane,—for which the weather prophets look about three weeks hence.

They tell us that this intense heat will last about six weeks longer, when, the rainy season being over, we may expect a long spell of beautiful weather. Meanwhile we only have occasional rain—very heavy when it does fall.

It was suddenly discovered that the roof of this old house (only four years old) was quite rotten—the thatch, I mean. So one hundred men were collected to repair it; and they are now crawling all over the roof like a swarm of ants, or else passing down the hill in long lines, bearing huge burdens of tall grass, ten feet high, with great white plumes of silky blossom. It is a very picturesque scene; but as they have been at it for about three weeks (and indeed there are always a tribe of workmen at some corner of the place, if not everywhere), we begin to wish they had finished, especially as many of them are unhappy-looking prisoners. One is a murderer, working in heavy chains; and though he looks very happy, generally climbing nimbly about the roof, notwithstanding this heavy weight, it makes me hot and miserable to see him. He was found guilty of the murder of a planter of the name of Burns, and his wife. It was a frightful story. I do not know why he was not hanged. He is working in chains because he has already escaped once and been recaptured; but from his extreme activity, I should think his fetters might prove a very slight impediment should he resolve to try his luck again. Another large body of men are working at the rough ground behind the house, turning it into a little garden. Already it is taking shape, and will doubtless be very nice by the time the capital is moved to another island, when it will probably be left to its fate. Sir Arthur is very anxious to effect this move, which

undoubtedly will, in the long-run, prove a wise step; but in the meantime it will, of course, entail various hardships on many of these already hard-struggling people. But I daresay it will be a good while before anything is done about it. Everything here is very slow work, and the inhabitants have sore need of patience.

It is pleasant to turn from the many cares and sorrows of the whites to the cheerier dark side of the picture; for the Fijians are always laughing, and seem always ready to sing and dance. Certainly they, too, are wretchedly poor; but they need very little, and are well off, where a white man would starve.

March 10.—I have just returned from a most delightful expedition, thanks, as usual, to the Wesleyan missionaries, to whose kind help I really am indebted for all I have yet seen of native life. Last week I had a letter from Andi Kuilla—*i.e.*, Lady Flag—daughter of Thakombau, asking me to go and stay with her at Bau, the native capital, to be present at a grand gathering of the chiefs, when all their most striking Bau dances would be performed at the great annual missionary meeting. It is the custom here for every district to hold an annual social gathering, to which all the people bring their contributions for the funds of the mission. These they generally carry in their mouth for safety, and spit them on to a mat at the feet of the missionary. The advantage of this self-acting purse to men who have no pockets, and whose hands carry clubs or fans, is evident. Then they go off in grand procession and have a dance, which combines ballet with pantomime, all the dancers being dressed up in the most startling varieties of Fijian style. Paint of all colours; garlands of every sort of material, for every limb except the head, which is adorned with its own magnificent halo of spiral goldeny curls—tiny ones—the hair standing straight out from the head; it is dotted with one or two blossoms or sprigs of grass, coquettishly stuck in.

Well, this invitation was most tempting, but there seemed at first no means of accepting it—no boat was to be had, and no escort. At last, in despair, I went off to ask a nice English girl, who talks perfect Fijian, if she would venture on coming alone with me (twenty-five miles in an open boat, supposing I could hire one). She agreed, and we went together to consult Mr Wylie, the missionary here. He at once solved all difficulties, and sent his own good boat for us at daybreak, in charge of a native teacher, who, he said, was only waiting for an opportunity to go to Bau. At the last moment, Captain Havelock, the Colonial Secretary, found he could manage to allow himself a holiday—the very first

since his arrival. So we started most happily. We had a lovely day for our long row (no wind for sailing, however); halted for luncheon at a small sandy island covered with cocoa-palms, and rested under a splendid Mbaka tree (Fijian banyan); then on again, and reached Bau at sunset. It is a tiny island just off the mainland.

We found kind Mr Langham waiting at the pier to welcome us and offer us comfortable quarters, as a Fijian house is not good for sleep on such occasions. It seemed to me the dancing was going on more or less for thirty-six hours, counting from the moment of our arrival, when a most picturesque rehearsal was going on in the bright moonlight! Of course there had been innumerable previous ones; for the figures are most elaborate, the movements very varied and like a complicated ballet in which every dancer (perhaps two hundred at once) must move in faultless time.

As we came up to Thakombau's quarters a hundred and fifty ladies of Bau were beginning their dance, each carrying a paddle of polished wood, which they waved and turned with simultaneous action. The general effect was most stately. (I should have said ladies and their attendants, for nowhere is all etiquette of rank and birth so rigidly cared for. All rank comes through the mother.) The dancers were led by Andi Lytia and Andi Kuilla, the ex-queen and her daughter. Both are very tall and stout,—really fine stately women. No high-bred English duchess could carry herself more nobly than these born ladies leading their Tongan minuet. One of the sons has just married a Tongan princess, a very pretty woman.

Hitherto I had only seen them in the undress of their homes, with a white waist-cloth, and sometimes a tiny pinafore only just covering the breast. Even then no one could fail to be struck with their true dignity. It is just the same with the men—the fine old chief and his handsome sons. It is quite impossible to look at these people now and realise the appalling scenes in which at least the older ones have so often joined. Now the ladies were in full dress, consisting of a waist-cloth of very rare black *tappa*, tiny jackets of white silk edged with lace, and no ornament whatever save a small English locket, and a small tuft of scarlet flowers in their halo of hair—that of the old queen is quite grey. They both looked really handsome.

Next day crowds of canoes kept arriving from every neighbouring island, and dancing and feasting went on all day. The grand *mékés* came off in the afternoon, but many of the occasional ones

were quite as pretty. Each district has dances peculiar to itself. Here there was not one spear-dance,—all clubs or fans. The men on these occasions are generally so painted and dressed up that you cannot recognise your dearest friend; and we were quite puzzled by the king's handsome sons, Ratu Joe and Ratu Timothy, appearing, one scarlet the other black, down to the waist. But we were chiefly puzzled and attracted by one very fine fellow, all painted black, with a huge wreath and neck-garland of scarlet hybiscus and green leaves, and rattling garters made of many hanging strings of large cockle-shells, and the usual *liku* (a sort of kilt or waist-drapery) of fringes of coloured *pandanus* leaves, or fresh ferns, &c. Of course he carried a club, and was barefooted. This man distinguished himself greatly, and afterwards acted the part of a huge dog in a dance where all the children appeared on all-fours as cats ("pussies"). Eventually we discovered him to be a European known as Jack Cassell.

One very pretty girl, Andi Karlotta, who is engaged to Ratu Joe, wore a rose-coloured bodice and *sulu*, and a tinge of red sprinkled over her hair, all to match. Very often now the girls wear streamers of English ribbon; but these Bau ladies hold their heads very high, and decided that, as girls on the mainland had adopted ribbon, they would *tambu* it; so only a little lace-edging was allowed. In addition to the actual kilt, many of the men wear innumerable loops and folds, and even a trailing train, of white *tappa*, the effect of which is graceful. Some wore a head-dress made of very delicate bands of it, from the forehead to the back of the neck, looking like tiny white wreaths; others wore a kind of turban of smoke-dried gauze, and large beautiful breast-plates of pearly shell inlaid with ivory.

Just when the principal *mékés* were over, a tremendous shower came on; happily not till the people had gone home to feast. Later it cleared up, and they danced the whole night in the moonlight, though the rain had converted half the grass into a lake. But as they had no satin shoes to think about, they danced right through it, and seemed very happy. Their commonest figure is a great double circle, working opposite ways, the orchestra standing in the middle, singing and beating time with bamboos; and sometimes they dance off like a very curly letter S to join another double circle.

We sat up watching them from the mission garden till past 1 A.M.; for though we were all tired, there was a solemn conference going on at the house, the neighbouring brethren having all

assembled to sit in judgment on the alleged delinquencies of a native minister. So, as their wives did not know whether they were to go home that night or not, all they could do was to lay their small children down to sleep in every corner. Finally one family departed, with two little ones, to row to a neighbouring isle and then carry the children a mile through the forest—one fair little thing carried by a Fijian child not much bigger than itself,—such a bright intelligent little monkey.

When we awoke next morning the dancers were still in full swing; but soon after sunrise all departed in their canoes, singing as they sailed away, and all declaring it had been a very pleasant time.

We foolishly allowed ourselves to be detained till towards noon, trusting to our host's practice in catching tides (for only at certain hours can you cross the coral-reefs, and that only at certain points, miles apart). But a head-wind set in and made a nasty wobbly sea. Our men were not very fresh, and when we neared the isle where we had lunched on our way, we found we had lost the tide and had to row a long way round outside the reef, and then come in by a passage so very narrow that it was difficult to discern it in the very fitful moonlight. It was an anxious moment passing between the two great lines of breakers which mark the edge of every reef. Once inside, the danger is only of running aground on coral-patches.

It was nearly 9 P.M. before we reached a small island where we were carried ashore and had supper on the sands under the palm-trees while our men rested. It was pleasant sitting in the moonlight, but when we had re-embarked very heavy rain came on; however, we had good waterproofs, and our men had a good coating of fresh oil, so it did no harm. It was clear moonlight when at last, at 1 A.M., we reached the pier, whereon lay sleeping a row of labour-boys, who had chosen this *al fresco* bedroom for the sake of the breeze. They are the servants from other isles, who work harder than Fijians. Fijians make most graceful table servants and good police. They look on their drill as a sort of *méké*, but they utterly abhor all hard work. So half the isles of the South Pacific are represented in the household. We woke the boys and got our things carried up to the house, crept up the verandah to my room without disturbing anybody, rigged up our mosquito-curtains, and had no further adventures save two battles with land-crabs, which came in and walked about clattering their claws against the woodwork, so that they had to be turned out. (I

clubbed one one night in my anguish lest he should nip my toes, but the result was so horribly nasty, that now I always catch them and carry them down to the little stream hard by, to prevent their coming back)—rather an aggravating episode to occur twice in a night when you are very tired; and before I was well asleep again, a pathetic little cry came from the nursery, "Oh, I am so sick, and nurse has gone to bathe!" So I had to fly to the rescue, to find dear little Jack on the sick-list. He is better to-day, but the climate is a very trying one for children—debilitating, though not positively unhealthy.

We have had intense heat and damp, but I think it is over now, and we have a sweet breeze, so long as we can sit in it; but unfortunately it does not reach rooms round the corner, so some are always hot. However, thanks to moving about a good deal for change of air, we all keep very fairly well.

Though our household party is nominally a large one, two or three are generally absent. Captain Knollys and Mr Gordon have just returned from an expedition to the camp up in the mountains, in the heart of the disaffected district, among the wild big-heads, the Kai Tholos, or people of the mountains. Captain Olive was sent up there some time ago with a strong force of native police (very fine men, and he glories in them, and lives like them and with them). He made a regular fortified camp, on a plain in the heart of the mountains, and at first the mountaineers thought he certainly meant war; but by degrees they are getting tamer, and the one tribe which is most seriously antagonistic has been vainly trying to persuade others to back it up, and they have refused; so now we hope all fear of fighting is over. But it was necessary to send up some more armed men as a reinforcement, and a great mass of stuff for barter; so these two went in charge of it, and have brought us back very interesting sketches of places and people. Mr Gordon is a real artist, and his sketches are very clever.

Up in the mountains the people are still heathen, and the dress is yet primitive. For full dress, women wear a fringe of grass four inches long. The men of the mountains when fully dressed wear a strip of *tappa* tied in a very large bow, and trailing train. Their heads are gigantic, about eighteen inches in diameter, and some much larger; the stiff hair being very long and bent back in large bunches, makes it grow inward among the roots: of course it is rarely, if ever, dressed, and forms magnificent cover! As the inmates are apt to tickle, every big-head wears a long pin stuck through the hair to scratch with, and when the irritation becomes

unbearable, he kindles a fire of banana-leaves, and, placing his wooden neck-pillow close to it, gets his head thoroughly smoked.

These wooden neck-pillows occupy a prominent position in the annals of the Fijian police-courts. They are handy weapons; and a bolstering match in which they figure is apt to be a serious one. They are a great check on aggravating curtain-lectures, and are used everywhere all over the isles. Most pillows are a stick about one inch in diameter, resting on two legs.

These Kai Tholos (highlanders) have many legends and fairy tales which, unfortunately, no one who has really mastered the language can find time to collect. One is, that the great *dakua* or *kaurie* pine-forests are haunted by tiny men called *Vélé*, with high conical heads. They carry small hand-clubs, which they throw at all trespassers, who go mad in consequence; but (mark the coincidence with German fairy tales) if you have the wit to carry in your hand a fern-leaf, they are powerless, and fall at your feet, crying, "Spare me." Once they all fell in love with a pretty human girl who strayed into the forest. They were so charmed with her that they kept her there a year before she managed to escape.

I find that Mr Williams, one of the earlier missionaries, took some notes on this subject. He says:—

"The Fijian peoples with invisible beings every remarkable spot: the lonely dell, the gloomy cave, the desolate rock, and the deep forest. Many of these, he believes, are on the alert to do him harm; therefore, in passing their territory, he throws down a few green leaves to propitiate the demon of the place. Among the principal objects of Fijian superstition are demons, ghosts, witches, wizards, fairies, evil-eyes, seers, and priests, all of whom he believes to possess supernatural power. A very old Fijian used to talk to me of 'those little gods,' with a faith as strong as that of a Highlander in his fairies. And these 'little gods' are the fairies of Fiji. 'When living near the Kauvandra mountains, I often used to hear them sing,' said the old man; and his eyes brightened as he went on to tell how they would assemble in troops on the tops of the mountains and sing unweariedly. They were all little—'like little children. I have often seen them and listened to their songs.' These are the mountain fairies. There are other 'little gods,' called *luve-ni-wai*, children of the waters. My list contains more than fifty of their names, but I believe it is incomplete. They are represented as wild and fearful, and at certain festivals they visit their worshippers, who for several successive weeks assemble morning and evening to allure them by drumming with short bamboos.

Little flags are placed at various inland passes to prevent these water-gods from passing on to the forests; so they halt at an enclosure where offerings have been prepared for them, and there the worshippers seat themselves and beat their bamboos, and others dance in most fantastic style, while one, called the *Linga Viu*, or shade-holder, dances in a circle all round the others, waving a sun-shade which he alone is privileged to carry."

"There is a warlock, called *Ndrudru Sambo*, who is very tall, and of a grey colour, with a wide flat head; he breathes hard, and makes a clattering noise as he moves. He steals fish from the fishermen, and dainty bits of food wherever he finds them. If touched with a spear he instantly takes the form of a rat."

I find that is all I can learn of the fairies at present. Possibly the reward of £100, offered at Max Müller's instigation, for a collection of such lore, may induce some one to find time to make one before it all dies out, as it invariably does when the people become civilised or Christianised and ashamed of old superstitions. Then good and bad all pass away together. But I must say the missionaries in Fiji have shown superlative common-sense in their method of dealing with native customs, discriminating between the innocent and the evil.

We are especially grateful to the Kai Tholos for proving that Christianity has no connection with broadcloth, and in every way discouraging the adoption of European garments. I have only seen one man foolish enough to appear in such—a native minister—and I rejoiced to hear his superiors indulging in gentle sarcasm, which would certainly have its effect. But in some neighbouring groups —Tonga for instance, where the people are even a finer race than these—everything native is dying out. To encourage the import of foreign goods, the people are *forbidden by law to make or wear native cloth*, and they are encouraged to make themselves objects of ridicule by adopting European dress. Imagine Parisian bonnets and absurd hats on these picturesque heads. This is the last news from Tonga just brought by H.M.S. Nymphe (Captain Grant Suttie), which went there to take Mr Layard, Consul of Tonga, on official duty. The cruise was delightful, but with some shadows. One officer, Mr Grey, died quite suddenly; the armourer also died, but he was very ill before they started.

Mr Gordon has gone off to-day to try and make an amicable temporary arrangement between some natives and a white settler, who all claim the same land. So the former spear the cattle of the latter and drive them down into the sea. The wretched beasts are

dying of starvation; and as it may be a couple of years before the Lands Commission can decide on the ownership of the innumerable estates claimed by hundreds of people, the white man's wife came here to crave some temporary interference. She wore a white dress and white lace, her hair in beautiful long ringlets, a large hat and feather, and is very interesting to look upon. I hear she is a splendid musician, and something of an artist. She is an Austrian lady who had money of her own, which her husband has invested in this charming way. I should think plantation life in Fiji was hard enough in any case; but when you come to being at loggerheads with the natives, it must be odious indeed.

Now I think I have given you a long enough screed. I am sure dear old Lady Ruthven will like to hear "A letter from Fiji." Please give her my kindest love.

March 16.—After all, our letters have never gone. The weather was so bad that it was impossible to finish necessary repairs to the Government steamer (which recently discovered a new coral-reef, greatly to her own discomfiture). The glass is falling steadily, and there is every symptom of an approaching hurricane, which will probably carry away our whole roof if it proves severe. Nor is this our only danger. This morning when daylight broke we found that my dear little burn in the rocky glen had swollen to an angry mountain torrent, and was tearing along, making new little streams and waterfalls in every direction—one right across the verandah. A squad of men have been working at a dike all the afternoon; but as it has rained steadily all day, and the bed of the stream is not ten feet from the drawing-room and nursery windows, we fully expect to be washed out to-night. So the drawing-room and my room have been entirely dismantled, and present a hideous sight of blank bare floors and packing-cases!

As for the poor little attempt at a garden, young rivers are careering all over it. As yet our only flowers are balsams, raised from seed, not very interesting flowers, but our only treasures in this flowerless region. But really, what pleasure is there in making anything nice in such a country? I thought I would have my room very dandy, so I invested in a pair of tall vases to stand on carved brackets and hold ferns and grasses. Almost the first day I put them up, one sudden gust of wind blew them both over, and I found only fragments!

The Governor has just come to despatch the gentlemen to dig out Mrs Macgregor, the doctor's wife, who is being buried by a mud avalanche, and her husband is far too busy with his sick folk to

look after her. The hospital is quite full, and he has out-patients in all directions. We certainly heard very false accounts of the healthiness of this place, especially the utter absence of sunstroke. At least three deaths have been due to it since we came. One victim was a Fijian, who dropped down dead at his work on Saturday; the other two were Engineers; and a labour-boy dropped down dead yesterday, but I do not know from what cause. A third Engineer died and was buried yesterday. They only landed here in September, and out of their corps of sixty men three have died, and many are on the sick-list. Just imagine that they have never yet got their sun-hats, or any white clothing, though this is by far the hottest place any of us have ever been in!

The cemetery lies on a hill beyond us, and it is so sad seeing all the funerals pass. The last was that of a poor American sailor, who died in hospital, and four labour-boys trotted past, carrying him with no more ceremony than if the coffin had been an old packing-case.

We have just had two interesting domestic events in the middle of the storm. The first was the arrival of a fine litter of young pigs, who chose this very awkward moment for their appearance. The other was the ruthless destruction of a cherished nest, just in front of the nursery window, where a Muscovy duck had made her home at the root of an old tree overhanging the water. We watched a sudden rush carry away her supporting-bank, and the poor thing looked up in despair, as, one after another, her eggs rolled into the stream. A Fijian rushed to the rescue up to his waist in water, saved the last six, and carried them and her off to the kitchen for safety, but she declines to sit on the surviving eggs.

A fresh access of storm. My door has just blown violently open. We are putting up hurricane-bars, and expect to have an anxious night. The new roof of the old house is leaking all over.

March 17.—We have had a night of it, but as yet no hurricane. However, old hands tell us we cannot hope we are through the wood for ten days to come, after which we may count on six months of pleasant weather. The rainfall yesterday was $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and all night the wind blew savagely; but the roof was very slightly damaged, and the stream kept in its proper channel. No harm was done, save that the boat-house was blown down. Luckily all the boats had been dragged up to the verandah for security.

Last night at sunset we were watching a poor little cutter try-

ing to beat in at the passage through the coral-reef. Then we lost sight of her in the utter darkness. This morning we hear she did reach a passage farther along the coast, but struck the reef and went down like a shot. The men got to shore, but she and her hard-earned cargo are lost. Her story may interest you. She was the private property of a tribe near Khandavu, who had the sense to see the advantages of owning a ship for themselves. About eighty of the tribe bound themselves to work for three years on plantations in order to pay off her price; and their long service has only just expired. So you see it is a serious loss to these poor folk.

March 18.—After a storm a calm. To-day is a dead calm—not a ripple on the sea. We do not know whether it is merely a case of *reculer pour mieux sauter;* but at all events, a vessel is to be despatched to-night to Khandavu on the chance of still being in time to catch the mail *viâ* Torres Straits. Anyhow, we hope we shall get some English letters, unless the storm blew the mail-steamers past us. We are rather anxious about Baron von Hügel, as he has for months been wandering about the mountains alone with natives, and a fortnight ago wrote that he was very ill. We expected him by the steamer to-day, but have no word of him.

CHAPTER XV.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE—PETS—CURIOS—CRABS—NATIVE POLICE—DEATH OF MRS DE RICCI.

NASOVA, *March* 23, 1876.

DEAR NELL,—We seem to have settled down to a quietly regular home-life, which really is very pleasant. When I think of the vile March winds which you are now enduring, and contrast them with our lovely mornings and evenings, when every breath is balm, I have only one exceeding longing, which is that you were here to share their luxury. Now that everything is well established, the house moves like a clock, of which Abbey and his wife are the mainspring. They have trained a set of Fijians to wait at table really admirably; they move gracefully and quickly, and look exceedingly handsome in a uniform Lady Gordon has

devised. Simply a white kilt and shirt, trimmed with crimson, with short sleeves and square-cut neck, to show a large boar's tooth against the clear brown throat. Then Sir Arthur has imported a Hindoo cook, and two excellent Hindoo valets, who are also upper housemaids. The rest of the household includes labour-boys of every colour and nation. We adhere to regular English hours—that is to say, coffee is brought to our rooms at seven A.M., and breakfast follows about nine; luncheon at one, tea at five, dinner soon after seven. There is no particular reason for having it later, as it is always dark by six.

I must tell you of one triumph of common-sense in the adoption, by Sir Arthur and all his staff, of what we call the Nasova uniform—namely, dispensing with the misery of a coat, and substituting a bright-coloured silken waist-sash for braces: now all the gentlemen look fresh and cool. It is a very sad evening when first a new man-of-war comes in, especially one of some foreign nation, and the presence of punctilious strangers involves full dress. But as soon as ever friendly relations are established, they, too, are privileged to adopt this comfortable costume, greatly to their own satisfaction.

At present H.M.S. Nymphe and H.M.S. Sapphire are both in harbour. Our cousin, Captain Grant Suttie, commands the former, and Mr Gordon's brother, Cosmo, is her first lieutenant. Captain Murray commands the Sapphire, and prides himself, as well he may, on the perfection of her every detail. His own cabins are exquisitely dainty in every respect; and Jack and Nevil are devoted to the lovely silky spaniels which are his inseparable companions. Their own particular little black-and-tan terrier Snip, has a child almost as big as itself, by name Bones. It has attached itself to me; and now the family is further increased by a fat and sportive puppy, of which Bones stands in great awe.

Sir Arthur has now acquired all manner of parrots—green and yellow, scarlet and black and purple—which wander all over the place. The most exquisite of all are the Kulas, tiny miniature parrots, combining green, scarlet, and purple in their gem-like plumage, and capable of being so thoroughly tamed that we have had them walking about the table at breakfast, climbing over the flowers, or sitting on our fingers, caressing us with their little rough tongues, and eating brown sugar and water, which, I believe, is the only safe food to give them. They are plucky little birds, and walk about the verandah on guard, and drive away the great big ducks, who stand in much awe of them. They also fight with the

beautiful wee kingfisher. The latter is useful in the way of killing cockroaches. The other day Abbey observed one of the laughing-jackasses half choking with the effort to swallow something, and going to the rescue found the dear little kingfisher half-way down its throat; neither seemed any the worse, however. A few days afterwards he again heard a scuffle, and found both the jackasses trying to swallow the same rat; as neither would yield its prize, he carried out Solomon's judgment with good effect, and both were satisfied!

I have been very busy for some time in painting careful studies of all the best objects of native art which come to any of us in our several collections. All the different patterns of carved bowls, with or without curiously shaped legs—some for oil, some for drink; all the multiform clubs and spears; all curious necklaces and ornaments; and a wonderful variety of wooden pillows. It is really a very interesting occupation, and now I am beginning to make drawings of every piece of pottery that any one of us acquires. I determined to do this, both because the pieces are so brittle that comparatively few will reach England in safety even with most careful packing, and also because, as each old woman works just according to her own fancy, the best pieces, many of which are really most artistic, are never made in duplicate—at all events it is rarely possible to obtain a second, and things made to order are utter failures.

Lady Gordon has had large shelves made at one end of the drawing-room, on which are placed some of our finest specimens of pottery, and very handsome they are, of rich greenish yellow and red, glazed with resin. For anti-macassars and sofa-covers we have handsome white native cloth, with rich brown pattern. And instead of a carpet, one large cool mat, on one corner of which Jack and Nevil (and any of their grown-up friends whom they can entrap) build vast castles with large wooden bricks which have just been made here. The dining-room is now beautifully decorated with trophies of spears and clubs, and great bowls, and native cloth. The house is all so thoroughly in keeping with the country; so infinitely preferable to any attempt at making a Europeanised "Government House," and so much more suitable to Sir Arthur's *rôle* of premier chief of Fiji.

There are one or two minor points, however, on which we should be better pleased if our home was not so purely Fijian; if, for instance, it were not so very attractive to the crabs—a family which share all a Briton's love for travelling and inspecting the

homes of other races. Here they bravely leave their native shore, and walk inland, wherever fancy leads them; and this, I regret to say, is frequently into our bedrooms, where they find hiding-places in dark corners behind boxes and portfolios, whence at night they sally forth to make further researches, clattering their shell-armour against the woodwork, occasionally knocking down something which wakens us with a sudden start, and up we spring to find perhaps a great broad-backed chap like a "parten" brandishing his powerful claws within a few inches of our unprotected toes. Then follows an exciting chase — a regular game at hide-and-seek—which probably awakens some of our sleeping neighbours, greatly to their disgust. Of course it results in the capture of the intruder, but then comes the question what to do with him. I cannot bring myself to stab him with a spine of cocoa-nut leaf, as the Fijian girls do (piercing him beneath the main claw, which is his only vulnerable point); so I carry him down to the stream and throw him in, hoping he will travel back to the sea. I have had many such nocturnal adventures, and confess that I wish the inquisitive crabs would stay at home.

Not that these are by any means the only members of the crab family which explore our abodes. Nowhere have I seen such a number of hermit-crabs as swarm on these isles, occupying every shell on the beach, from the least to the greatest. There are literally myriads of them, and sometimes the whole shore appears to be moving. But these errant hermits are by no means content to remain on the sea-beach,—they wander far up the valleys, and meet us in most unexpected places, carrying their borrowed homes with them; and we occasionally find them creeping up our mosquito-nets, and in other equally startling hiding-places.

There are also land-crabs which climb the tall cocoa-nut palms, and feed on the nuts, tearing them open with strong unpleasant-looking pincers. And one kind is more troublesome than an English mole or rabbit, from the aggravating manner in which it burrows in the ground, making such innumerable holes as to render any bit of grass quite honeycombed. It would be very dangerous to ride on.

But by far the most attractive members of the crab family are those which inhabit such muddy shores as those of Suva harbour, near the mouths of the rivers, where they were to me an unfailing source of amusement. I spent hours watching them stealing cautiously out of their holes when they were sure the coast was clear, but darting back like a flash of lightning at the faintest movement

of any living thing, even the vibration of the most cautious footstep. But if I waited very patiently and motionless, they presently reappeared one by one, till all along the shore I saw their strange bright-coloured claws waving aimlessly in the air. These crabs are tiny creatures, whose whole body rarely exceeds an inch in diameter; but they own one huge claw as large as their whole body, and when feeding they hold this up as a guard, as if shielding their eyes, while with a tiny one they gather up their food on the shore, lifting an atom at a time into their mouth. This large pincer is invariably of some bright colour—yellow, rose-colour, or scarlet—while the rest of the body is black and white, purply, or brown. You cannot think how curious it is to see the whole shore dotted with these waving yellow claws, which, on the very slightest movement on your part, vanish in the twinkling of an eye, and leave you standing alone on a dull expanse of brown mud, without a symptom to suggest the existence of this great army of crabs.

How delighted Ran would be if he could only see the daring little bronze lizards, with bright blue tails, which keep darting about the verandah and all about the rooms. I am sitting on a long wicker-chair, and a big lizard and a little one have been playing hide-and-seek for the last two hours, the little one darting in and out through the holes in the wicker-work, sometimes at my back, sometimes darting under the chair and reappearing in front: sometimes I catch a glimpse of a head whose diamond eyes peep through the little round holes in the wicker; then a bit of blue tail just reveals itself; sometimes it hides in the folds of my dress. Altogether it is one of a family of great darlings

Besides these various strange creatures, we find continual amusement in watching the various natives who are constantly about the place. A detachment of the native police live in several cottages just on the other side of the *rara*, which is a small piece of rather level grass (a most rare and valuable possession). Here they drill morning and evening in correct European style; but I hope the word police will not suggest to you visions of the British "bobby." These are a most picturesque force, and supply the Governor's guard, boat-crews, orderlies, &c. We are such near neighbours that we hear their yangona *mékés*, whenever they brew their beloved grog; and we also have full benefit of morning and evening church parade and *lotu*. They have their own chaplain.

Some of them are exceedingly fine men, with strong muscular frame and good features, set off by a splendid head of frizzy hair, which, I am happy to say, Captain Knollys encourages them to

grow long. Of course it does not approach the gigantic mop of heathen days, but still it is very large and carefully groomed. They periodically dip the whole in coral-lime, and go about for a day or two white-headed; and very becoming it is to them. I cannot speak of this as of one of the mysteries of the toilet, for the washing is done in public. The girls when undergoing this process look like court beauties got up for a fancy ball; and as for the men, we might almost think we had a staff of powdered footmen, were it not for a scarlet hybiscus or tuft of coloured grass knowingly stuck in on one side; I even sometimes see one long cock's feather. When the lime is washed off, the hair, now beautifully clean, is combed out to its full length, and while the roots retain their rich brown, the outer locks vary from a warm russet to a tawny yellow, according to the quality of the lime. Both colours harmonise well with the rich brown madder tone of the skin. This also varies, ranging through senna to clear olive in the men of Tongan or Samoan blood. The hair and body next share a coating of cocoa-nut oil, and not till you have seen this applied can you realise the force of the expression, "Oil to make him of a cheerful countenance." A Fijian who, from poverty or other cause, has failed to oil himself, is a most wretched-looking creature.

We have had a good many visits lately from different chiefs, several of whom have come to formal dinners, and have got through that ordeal in the most creditable manner. I should think that sitting on chairs for two hours, during a long series of courses of strange dishes, eaten with unwonted knives and forks, must be very trying to them; but they are so well bred, that they never allow themselves to appear bored, nor do they make any mistakes,—and of course the Fijian servants are on the alert to help them out of any dilemma; besides, at least one of the Governor's interpreters is always of the party. Some of the ladies have been asked to dine, but have invariably excused themselves. They do not mind coming to luncheon, which is less alarming, and occasionally bring pretty children,—greatly to little Jack's delight. He does love babies! Nevil rather despises them. A few days ago a party of Fijian ladies were caught in a tropical shower, just as they reached the house. All their pretty native finery was destroyed; but we found no difficulty about supplying dry clothing, as so little was required. Lady Gordon gave the principal lady a new shawl to wear as a *sulu*, and begged her to accept it, which she did with great satisfaction.

I forgot to tell you of one very pretty expedition I had last

week. Dr Macgregor had to visit the isle of Naingani to see if it would do for a quarantine station, so he asked me to go with him. He had the harbour-master's boat, manned by six wild-looking Solomon Island and New Britain boatmen. Three hours' steady rowing brought us to a pretty isle, with white coral shore, haunted by myriads of hermit-crabs, and overshadowed by very fine old *ndelo* trees. We lunched beside a pool of fresh water on the shore, and found two good streamlets. The people seemed very poor. The coral-patches were lovely, and I found much amusement watching black and yellow sea slugs, with heads like flowers, and black and white star-fish. Then I sketched the great trees, while the doctor did his inspection; after which we had a lovely row home.

There is a good deal of sickness going about just now. Amongst other sufferers is old Mrs Floyd, the mother of our parson, who has nursed her with such unwearied devotion, that now he is quite worn out. So last Sunday Captain Havelock undertook both services. He makes a first-rate chaplain.

I have just been up the hill with Mrs Havelock. We sat under the shadow of a great rock, with breezy sunshine all round us, and the lovely harbour below. I wished you had been sitting there with me. We watched the glowing sunset colours, though we were facing due east. Every morning we see the sun rise out of the sea; and at night we sit out in the starlight and watch the Great Bear, which appears just over Levuka, and is very brilliant. It seems strange, does it not, that we, so low in the southern hemisphere, should look on such a familiar reminder of home?

We have had a sad death in the family from gluttony! One of the omnivorous laughing-jackasses contrived to catch Mrs Abbey's pet canary, and swallowed it, feathers and all. Strange to say, this actually proved too much for its digestion—or rather for its throat, for it died of suffocation. We shall hear its derisive laughter no more. Alas, poor jackass!

The English mail has just brought me a budget of home-letters, and news of many matters that come to us as vivid reminders of the far-away grey isles, which I do sometimes long to see, for the sake of the many warm hearts they contain,—not that I find these lacking in any corner of the earth. Good-bye, darling.—Your loving sister.

FIJI, *March* 29, 1876.

DEAREST NELL,—I have just received, and greatly enjoyed, my budget of home-letters. . . . At present I am staying in Levuka,

nursing my pretty, nice little friend, Mrs de Ricci, who has a very severe attack of fever. She has been for ten days in great danger, and is even now in high delirium. She and I have been great friends ever since we first met in Sydney; for she is a bright sunny little woman, always ready to make the best of everything. Her husband is the Attorney-General here; but their household, like most others in this land of discomfort, consists of a rough Irish girleen and an unkempt Fijian lad; so when the bonny little woman was taken very ill, Dr Macgregor came to see if I would go to help for a night. I have stayed on ever since, as she knows me through her delirium, and is content generally to do what I ask her. So hitherto we have rejected the various kind offers of help from friendly neighbours, and have divided the watches between us, and so manage very well. Nursing is much simplified in the tropics, where you have not to think about fires, happing up clothes, and keeping out draughts. On the other hand, nothing will keep, and your milk and beef-tea and chicken-broth go bad almost before you can use them. Our patient has to eat something every hour; and sometimes it is difficult to keep things fresh. However, I think she is getting on pretty well.

NASOVA, *Sunday, April* 2.

Alas! our watching proved in vain. Yesterday morning, in the grey dawn, the sweet soul passed quietly away, unconsciously and without pain, in her early spring-time. She was only twenty-two. She had battled through the fever and subsequent dysentery, and we thought all danger was over, when suddenly a change for the worse set in, and it became evident there was no hope. We have the comfort of knowing that if human skill could have availed to keep her here, we certainly had excellent medical advice, having two very clever doctors—Macgregor and Mayo—in constant attendance, and two more in consultation. . . . Her one regret, since she arrived here, was that she had left her only child in England —a lovely little fellow, aged three. She has missed him sorely. Now we are glad to think that he is safe at home. . . . At sunset we laid her to rest, under the shadow of a great boulder of red rock, on a headland overlooking the sea, with palms and wild-citron trees and tall reedy grass all round,—a most lovely spot, especially at sunrise, when the sun comes up out of the sea — or in the beautiful moonlight. I found it one day while exploring the bush round the cemetery. It is within its boundaries, yet quite apart. Captain Knollys had a narrow path cleared yesterday leading to it.

The evening was dreary beyond description. The sea and sky were leaden. We had the first part of the service in church by candle-light. Mr Maudslay had made a lovely cross of white flowers, which lay on the coffin. By the time we came out it was quite dark, and we stumbled along the wretched path through the town to the shore, where boats were waiting. Of course we were all present, and sad enough, as you may well believe; for this is a heavy cloud for our small community.

It is two miles from the church to the cemetery (which lies a mile beyond Nasova). Happily it did not rain while we were going, but previous downpours had made the steep clay path leading up to the hill from the sea-beach so slippery, that it was all the sailors could do to carry the coffin (Captain Grant Suttie had sent his boats and men from the Nymphe). The service was read by the dim light of a lantern, and was scarcely ended when the rain fell in torrents—a dismal night indeed. . . .

To-day is clear and beautiful. Arthur Gordon went up the hill to search for lovely mosses, and Baron von Hügel and I made a large cross of ferns, white silky grass, and scarlet balsams, which we carried to the now sacred headland—one more spot of earth to recall our favourite motto, *Ci rivedremo.*[1] To-morrow a tall rude cross of cocoa-nut palm will be placed there, to mark the spot, till a permanent one of granite can come from England. On this island there is no stone suitable for the purpose,—nothing but coarse conglomerate. I do not need to tell you how closely this has touched us all, and tended to draw us together. One of our little sisterhood already gone, in her very prime. . . . Her husband returns to England by the first steamer to see his child.

Sir William and Lady Hackett are also to leave almost immediately, he having been appointed a judge of the Supreme Court in Ceylon.[2] . . .

NASOVA, *April* 6.

I have just received a most kind letter from the Langhams, who are going for a month's cruise among the small isles in the centre of the group. They go in the mission-ship the Jubilee, and invite

[1] "We shall meet again."

[2] A few weeks after his arrival in Ceylon, Sir William Hackett died at the dreary rest-house in Newera Elya. Enfeebled by long residence in the tropics, he was unable to rally from an attack of illness which he deemed too trivial for care. So passed away a just judge, and a man who had made himself greatly respected in the little infant colony, whose code of laws he had been selected to draw up and administer.

me to go with them. Of course I have accepted gladly; and the fact of the mission-house at Bau being thus left empty is such a grand chance of a change for Lady Gordon and the chicks, that the Governor has asked for the loan of it, which has been cordially granted, and Mrs Havelock will accompany them.

We all felt that after such a trying time a change of scene would be very desirable; but one of the many drawbacks of this colony is, that there is literally no place to which ladies and children can go for a few days, unless such a chance as this occurs. Even the wretched house which Sir Arthur rented at Suva last December is now turned into a public-house, where we could not stay again; and however hospitably inclined our white neighbours may be, there are probably not half-a-dozen in the whole group who have even one spare room. So it happens that neither Mrs Havelock, Lady Hackett, Mrs Macgregor (nor dear little Mrs de Ricci), have had one day's absence from Levuka since they landed here in July.

I believe the real secret of preserving health in this climate is frequent change of air, and, as you know, I have been pretty constantly on the move. But it is not every lady who could enjoy the sort of prolonged gipsy or picnic life as much as I do. Now we are starting to try it in a new phase.

H.M.S. Barracouta has just come into harbour, and Captain Stevens dined here last night. He unfortunately got mixed in the Samoan difficulties, and has brought Colonel Steinberger here as a prisoner, which is rather embarrassing. A few days ago a barque arrived here from Samoa, bringing eight wounded sailors belonging to the Barracouta. They got into an apparently senseless row with the natives, in which three blue-jackets were killed. Doubtless this will involve some further complication.

CHAPTER XVI.

GOOD FRIDAY IN FIJI—ISLE KORO—PLANTERS' HOUSES—LABOUR—MAKING NATIVE CLOTH — GREAT FEASTS — WEDDINGS — SALARIES OF WESLEYAN MISSIONARIES AND TEACHERS.

NAMATHU, ISLE OF KORO,
Good Friday, 1876.

DEAR NELL,—It is raining heavily, and the wind is foul, and the Jubilee has had to run to safer anchorage, otherwise we were

to have started this afternoon, to spend Easter on another island. I cannot say I regret the detention, as our surroundings here are pleasant and peaceful, and it is time I sent you a report of my wanderings.

This day last year we were all in Paris, and spent the whole day in solemn crowded churches—La Madelaine and St Roch,—and at the latter, after the office of Les Ténébres, I followed the stream of people into the small dark chapel of the Entombment, where the sole ray of light falls on the sepulchre, and on the strangely life-like groups of sculpture on either side, representing the Crucifixion and the Entombment, all the figures life-size. A most impressive scene.

Very different are our surroundings to-day, housed in a large cool native house, the home of Isaaki, a fine old native minister, who has charge of this beautiful island. It is an unusually nice house, having actually two distinct rooms, so it is an easy matter to partition the inner one, and thus we each have a really cosy little nest, which is the more agreeable as this place is an important centre, and we have been here for five days. Wonderful to tell, the house has wooden doors, but it is a strange thing in a country so richly wooded as this to see that, owing to the scarcity of planks, all the doors are made of old, battered, and worm-eaten canoes; so also are the bridges, in those rare cases where anything is provided more elaborate than the slippery stem of a cocoa-palm. Stranger still is it to hear that in many of these beautiful isles stone is so rare that, when some time ago a white settler had procured a sandstone slab to place on a grave, the people came from miles round to sharpen their knives on it! The principal charm of this house is that it stands a little way apart from the village, on a quiet coral shore, close by the sea, with palms and other trees round it, and in this respect is a perfect paradise compared with some places, where our night quarters have been in some stuffy overcrowded house, in the very heart of the village.

There is a fine church here (just a large native house, thatched and matted, with open doors all round it, which is by far the most suitable style of architecture for this climate), and this morning there was a crowded attendance. I stayed at home, knowing that the service would be very long; and the sound of a voice, or voices, speaking continuously in an unknown tongue, becomes exceedingly wearisome after a time, especially when the novel interest of watching the undulating pavement of tawny heads, brown backs, and white *sulus* has worn off.

I told you how kindly the Langhams offered to call for me at Levuka, and take me with them on this cruise in the mission-ship Jubilee, which is a 50-ton schooner. We started from Nasova at daybreak on April 8th, intending to go to the isle Nairai, but finding the wind favourable for Koro came here instead. Mrs Langham and I were both very sick all day, and very thankful when at sunset, we anchored off a village called Nambuna, where the teacher gave us entire possession of his small but tidy house, close to the sea, and embowered in tall plantains and cocoa-palms, and, moreover, enclosed by a fence made of tree-fern stems. Here we spent Palm Sunday, and had service under the shady *ndawa* trees, which are like large walnut-trees, with young red leaves. It was a very pretty scene. Also it was the first time I had been present at an open-air celebration of the Holy Communion, and this devout congregation of gentle savages, kneeling so reverently on the grassy sward, beside the calm blue sea, made our Palm Sunday service for 1876 one much to be remembered. In the evening we had an English service, to which came several planters and their families; and we walked home with one lady along the white shore in the clear bright moonlight. It was most lovely. The foliage is much richer than on Ovalau; and there are such good paths along the shore that riding would be delightful, if there were any horses.

We left Nambuna the following morning in a rowing-boat, but owing to sundry delays lost the high tide, and only got on at all by most careful steering through intricate patches of lovely coral. Every few minutes we found ourselves in such shallow water that all the crew had to jump overboard; Mr Langham and a friend did likewise, not expecting to go above the knee, but before they could get in again they were over the waist! Finally, we fairly stuck, and the boat had to wait for the tide, while we were carried ashore, and walked on to the next village.

We met a good many planters hereabouts,—all poor, many of them having sunk quite large fortunes on their plantations when Fijian cotton was selling at very high prices. Now they are sadly down-hearted; and many seem grievously disappointed that annexation, so far from working miracles of healing for shattered fortunes, appears for the present to have only added to their difficulties in many ways. But all were very kind to us, and seem cheered by even a glimpse of faces from the outer world. We called at Mr Chalmers's very pretty estate, and he showed us all over his cocoa-nut fibre-works. He grows cotton and maize, but his principal

crop is red and white arrowroot, which we saw in all stages of preparation. Then climbing a very steep path, we were welcomed by his pretty refined wife and daughters—bright handsome girls. They gave us tea with milk, though their goat only yields about a tumbler for the whole family, including several children. Certainly life on a Fijian plantation does not mean luxury, or rather it means such hardships as you, I am certain, cannot realise. Butcher-meat unattainable; poultry and eggs too precious for domestic use; fish-supply rare; fruit, as a rule, *nil;* even flour and groceries apt to run short. Daily fare consists of native vegetables, and perhaps a barrel of salt meat,—not an appetising diet, nor one to tempt a jaded palate, nor yet easily varied. Of course the importation of all sorts of preserved meats and fruits makes provisioning an easy matter for occasional travellers, but their constant use in a large family does not tend to economy.

We heard abundant instances of the invariable ill-luck which seems to attend all efforts at improvement in this unfortunate country. At one house where we called, the owner, Mr Morey, had recently imported some valuable fowls. He discovered, when too late, that they were tainted with disease, which rapidly spread, and his own stock of two hundred fowls all died, besides turkeys, ducks, and guinea-fowl. We found his wife suffering torture from a form of ophthalmia which is very common in this country, known as *theeka*, from which, for the time, she was positively blind. Happily Mr Langham's medical skill proved useful in relieving her agony. One gentleman whom we met was suffering severely from an illness called *waanganga*, which causes the muscles of the arm to contract in such a manner that for several days you cannot bend it.

At one plantation we found an unpleasant instance of a state of things common enough hitherto, but now happily becoming impossible, as fast as the new order of law can make it so: A plantation worked by foreign labour, who declare that they were all kidnapped under circumstances of varied brutality, from the isles of Santo, Solomon, &c., and who have been illegally detained here for six years without receiving any pay. (The law provides for their being sent home after three years, with full pay.) Now an additional six months have slipped away, during which they have been detained, week by week, buoyed up by vain promises, and seeing men on neighbouring estates receiving a shilling a-week for every week they are detained, waiting for a ship to take them home. Naturally they are savage and sullen by turns, and repeatedly

threaten the life of the young man left in charge of the estate, in the absence of the principal. He tells them that if they kill him they will be hanged for murder; but they say they would just as soon be hanged as live on in slavery.

One says he left his wife and six children the morning he went with his best pig to trade with the great ship; some say their canoes were smashed by heavy weights dropped from the ship, which left them helpless and at the mercy (!) of the white men; others say they were inveigled on board to see machinery and other strange sights, and when they came on deck the land lay miles behind them. Some weeks ago one of them threw a spear at the young overseer. It was caught and checked by another man; but on his threatening the culprit with a licking, the whole body rose *en masse*, and in the dead of night came and took possession of his verandah, where he heard them all night consulting whether to kill him or not. Just before our arrival, two men rushed at him with knives, and he had just time to retreat to his house and snatch up an (unloaded) revolver, whereupon they retired. Now he has pacified them for the moment by distributing *sulus*, off a bale of cloth sent up by his employer to barter for *coppra* (the men were literally naked); and he further promises to take a number of them to Levuka next week to tell their own story to the immigration agent. Do not such cases as these suggest plainly enough what deep wrongs to be avenged have led to such grievous results as the murder of Commodore Goodenough or Bishop Patteson?

Even with respect to the Fijians, I am sorry to say that the *niceness* of the natives depends greatly on how *few* whites they see. The inhabitants of the isles frequented by whites are immeasurably inferior to those in more remote districts, and far less trustworthy.

Our next halt was at Nasau, a very pretty village on the shore, beneath palms and other foliage, with a steep wooded hill just behind it, and a carefully kept burial-ground with red-leaved plants on the graves. But I think the night was the most unpleasant we have spent in Fiji. The house given to us was in the very middle of the village, and so small as to have only one door and one small window, both of which were continually blocked up by a crowd of gaping spectators, who, contrary to all Fijian manners, would not go away even when we were vainly attempting to sleep. Unfortunately for us, a child died in a large house next door to us, and the whole night was devoted to doing honour to the parents. So while the mother and other women wailed at the top of their voices, the young folk danced in a circle in front of the house, singing

their usual songs. This went on the whole night. You can fancy we did not sleep much! In the morning I went to the door of the house, where the family appeared as cheerful as usual, and pleasantly invited me to enter. In so doing I narrowly escaped treading on a mat at the doorway, which I then discovered was thrown over the dead child, a five-year-old little one.

School and church service being over, I walked along the shore with Mrs Langham. It is a lovely coast, shaded by grand old trees, with here and there rich masses of creepers, which climb all over them, so that a group of a dozen *eevie* trees appears like one gigantic mass of lovely trailing foliage. We saw a whole valley clothed with the great white convolvulus, which is excellent food for cattle. The leaves take every shade of metallic green, yellow, and bronze, and this effect is wonderfully lustrous.

Isaaki, the venerable grey-haired minister, came to meet and welcome us. He is a very fine-looking old man, dignified and gentle, a striking contrast to a large number of Kai Tholos—*i.e.*, mountain people—who were sent here as prisoners by the late Government, and who do look most miserable objects now. They will soon be sent back to their own district. The women are much and hideously tattooed round the mouth and all over the lips and about the shoulders, and their only clothing is a fringe of dried grass. The women of the coast happily indulge in an exceedingly small display of tattooing. Some have slight patterns on the hands and arms, which are considered attractive, but the majority only submitted to so much as was compulsory.[1]

I have been much interested in watching various native manufactures. In one village called Natheva—*i.e.*, the South—the women were making dresses of the streamers of pandanus, brightly dyed, and others were plaiting mats made of tall flags or reeds, which they cut into strips with a sharp shell. In another village I sat in the chief's house watching the girls rasping sandal-wood with which to powder their hair and scent their hair-oil. One girl held the stick, and another had a large piece of skin of the sting ray-fish, stretched over another stick so rough as to act like a file as she rubbed it over the sandal-wood. There was formerly a considerable amount of this fragrant wood in these isles, but ruthless traders have swept the land so thoroughly, without the slightest

[1] In old heathen days the tattooing of a woman was as important and compulsory a religious ceremony as the circumcision of a lad. Special penalties in the future world awaited the woman who contrived to evade this rite. Retributive furies armed with sharp shells would fall on her and tear her flesh for ever and ever.

thought of sparing young saplings, that now the tree scarcely exists, and the smallest fragment is dearly prized.

Wherever we go, we find the women busy preparing native cloth from the bark of the paper mulberry tree, which they take off in long strips and steep in water to make the fibre separate from the green outer bark, which is scraped off with a sharp shell. Then the fibre is laid on a wooden board and beaten with a mallet, which is grooved longitudinally. A strip two inches wide can be beaten out to upwards of a foot in width, when it becomes gauze-like, and is used for festal attire; or else, dyed in burnt sugar and smoke-dried, it is a much-valued covering for the hair. But for general use, two strips of the wet fibre are beaten together, their own gluten causing them to adhere to one another; or if very strong cloth is required, three or even four thicknesses may be used. A number of such pieces are then neatly joined together with a glue made from the *taro*, or from arrowroot, and thus a piece can be made of any size or length required. Sometimes a great roll, a couple of hundred yards long, is prepared for presentation to a chief; or else a double square, twenty feet wide by perhaps thirty or forty in length, to be hung up as mosquito-curtains. The *masi* at this stage is of a creamy white colour, very becoming to the brown creatures who wear it.

So far it simply answers to calico. If gorgeous apparel or handsome furniture is required, it has next to be converted into painted *tappa*, and this is the prettiest part of the process, and requires considerable taste and skill. The patterns produced are exceedingly rich and handsome, generally in shades of brown, sometimes with black or deep red. I have seen pieces imported from Samoa in which a great deal of yellow is introduced; but though the Samoan cloth is much stronger, it is less tasteful. To sketch the design, the artist arranges thin strips of bamboo upon a convex board, and between them the pattern is indicated by curved bits of the midrib of a cocoa-nut leaf. The cloth is laid over this board and rubbed with a dye, which displays the pattern below, and thus the ground-work is prepared. Then the borders are very elaborately painted by a sort of stencil-work, the pattern being cut out of a banana leaf, heated over the fire, and laid on the *masi*. Then with a soft pad of cloth, dipped either in vegetable charcoal and water, or red earth liquefied with the sap of the candle-nut tree, or any other dye that takes her fancy, the artist does her work with deft neat fingers. I have succeeded in buying several small pieces of very beautiful design. The larger ones are generally being made by the order of some chief, or for some especial festivity.

Another process which I have watched with considerable interest is that of the girls preparing *mandrai*, which is bread made of bananas and bread-fruit. A Fijian baker's oven is simply a pit lined with plantain leaves and filled with bananas or bread-fruit, on which the girls tread to compress them into a pulpy mass: this they then cover with a thick layer of green leaves and stones, and leave it to ferment, a process which begins about the third day. The indescribable stench which poisons the air for half-a-mile round on the day when these dreadful pits are opened is simply intolerable,—at least to the uneducated nose of us, the *papalangi* (*i.e.*, foreigners); but the Fijian inhales it with delight, therein scenting the bread and puddings in which he most delights.

These puddings are sometimes made on a gigantic scale, on the occasion of any great gathering of the tribes. One has been described to me as measuring twenty feet in circumference; and on the same occasion — namely, the marriage of old King Tanoa's daughter to Ngavindi, the chief of the fisherman tribe—there was one dish of green leaves prepared, ten feet long by five wide, on which were piled turtles and pigs roasted whole: there was also a wall of cooked fish, five feet in height and sixty feet long. The puddings are generally made of *taro*, cooked and pounded, and made into small lumps, which are baked, and afterwards all heaped in one great pit lined with banana leaves, and mixed up with sugar-cane juice and pounded cocoa-nut. I have been told about one great feast for which nineteen gigantic puddings were prepared, the two largest being respectively nineteen and twenty-one feet in circumference. Verily our familiar Scottish haggis must bow to those Fijian cousins, and confess himself to be no longer the

"Great chieftain of the pudding race."

Certainly the masses of food accumulated on these great days beat everything we have heard of even at ancient Scottish funeral feasts. Enormous ovens were prepared (they would be so still, at any great gathering of chiefs). They are simply great pits, perhaps ten feet deep and twenty in diameter, which are lined with firewood, on which is arranged a layer of stones: when these are heated the animals to be roasted are laid on them, with several hot stones inside each to secure cooking throughout. Then comes a covering of leaves and earth, and the baking process completes itself. This, on a smaller scale, is the manner in which our daily pig is cooked. I have seen a bill of fare which included fifty pigs roasted whole, seventy baked turtles, fifteen tons of sweet pudding, fifty tons of

yams and *taro*, and piles of yangona root, besides many trifling dainties.[1]

Happily for us, the puddings are not all nasty; some are rather nice; and one preparation of arrowroot bread is excellent. Our daily pork is not served here with the same unerring regularity as it was on our mountain trip, where we lived in an ever-present atmosphere of roast-pig, fatted-pig, or sucking-pig, as the case might be,—pig it was always. Here fish, and even fowl and occasional eggs, form a delightful variety; and of course we always have tinned provisions in case of need.

One thing which I do not think I have yet mentioned, is that in every village there is invariably one large house called the *buré*, where all the young men sleep. It would be contrary to all notions of propriety that they should occupy the same house as the women, even their nearest relations. In fact, brothers and sisters, or brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, and various other near kinsfolk, are forbidden even to speak to one another, or to eat from the same dish. For a man to eat food left by a woman would be highly *infra dig.;* and to unroll a mat belonging to a woman, or to lie down upon it, would be the height of impropriety. The laws of affinity in regard to marriage are very curious. First cousins, who are children of brother and sister, may intermarry, but the children of two men who are full brothers may on no account do so, indeed, may hardly speak to one another. No word exists to express uncle. All brothers are alike called father by their nephews, but the nephew has various rights greater than those of a son. In the matter of succession it is the brother, not the son, who succeeds as head of the family, and *he* is succeeded by *his* brother; finally, the succession reverts to the eldest son of the eldest brother. This order is, however, liable to modification by the rank of the mother, or the personal influence of the nephew, who enjoys most singular privileges. He is called a *vasu*, and in certain districts is allowed

[1] At a great meeting of chiefs at Bau in January 1880, on the return of Sir Arthur Gordon from England, the *menu* included 104 pigs and a large shark, cooked whole; I suppose the latter is the modern substitute for the *bokola* of old days, without which a feast would have been thought poor indeed. The speech made by the Vuni Valu on this occasion is worthy of note. At the conclusion he said, addressing the still powerful chiefs: "Now you have plenty of money, the native officials receive their salaries regularly, the people are flourishing and have plenty of goods. You chiefs are at rest mentally, not as of old. Need I ask you, Is it a good thing to be under Great Britain? Would any one like to change again, I ask? Let any one who will, speak, lest it should be said we have been deceived or robbed. It is not so. We still hold our positions. The chiefs still are chiefs, whilst the people are better off than they ever were before. If we had not given ourselves to Great Britain, we should probably have been at war among ourselves long ago. Let no man say we have given away our rights. No; we have secured them."

the extraordinary prerogative of claiming anything he wishes which belongs to his uncle or the uncle's vassals, especially the uncle on the mother's side. If the nephew is a *vasu levu*—*i.e.*, the son of a high-born woman by a high chief—there is practically no limit to the exactions to which he may subject his unfortunate uncle. He may appropriate his new canoe, his best garments, his valuable curtains, mats, club, necklace—whatever he covets; and the uncle has no redress,—the action is *vaka Viti* (custom of Fiji), and that argument is unanswerable. I have even heard of a nephew of a chief of Rewa who, having quarrelled with his uncle, exercised this right to the extent of seizing his store of gunpowder, and employing it against him.

In the last few days there have been a great many weddings: and the people here are much more elaborately got up for the occasion than our friends in the mountains. Here both bride and bridegroom are swathed in so many yards of beautifully painted native cloth, that it is scarcely possible for them to move. As they could not walk any distance with this inconvenient weight of magnificence, those who come from other villages let their friends carry the wedding-garment, and then they dress under the trees beside the sea—a process which I have often watched with much interest. The cloth is rolled round the body in so many folds that the victim is simply a walking bale of stuff; besides this, great loops and folds are worn *en panier*, and a huge frill is so arranged as to stand up like a fan at the back. A train of eight or ten yards is carried by attendants; and the effect produced is really very handsome and becoming, especially when several couples arrive at church simultaneously. Some have come in the evening by torchlight—the torches made of bundles of reeds, which blaze brightly—and the scene has been a very pretty one.

We went one evening to a wedding-feast, hoping to see some of the old distinctive ceremonies, such as Mrs Langham remembers in old days. But the graceful customs have been abandoned, together with the unseemly, and the young couple simply sat together, partook of pig and yam, and washed their hands in one bowl. The bride was the prettiest girl I have seen in Fiji. Her hair was powdered with finely-grated sandal-wood, and her wedding-dress consisted of folds of the finest gauze-like *masi*, crossed over each shoulder and under the breasts. One of the couples seemed to afford great amusement to the bystanders,—a very cheery little old maid was marrying a kindly-looking old man. They seemed quite happy about it themselves, so could afford to let the neighbours

laugh. One poor young couple were not allowed to marry, as, at the last moment, Mr Langham discovered that the damsel was a minor, and her father absent.

We were amused to see several brides and bridegrooms reappear, in simple attire, to take their place as scholars in the school-examinations, at which one charming brown baby appeared, toddling about, dressed in the cover of an old umbrella as its *sulu!* All the babies have the quaintest shaven heads, with odd little tufts of hair left as fancy prompts. The little girls generally have a long lock left on one side, forming a dozen very fine plaits; many are quite little dandies, in their small kilts of fine white *masi*, or Turkey-red, and necklace of bright leaves, or the orange seed of the pandanus. Some are very fully attired in a scarlet pocket-handkerchief, tied across the breast, and forming a tiny petticoat. But the jolliest baby of all had no clothes at all, and could only just toddle; but it gravely followed the others, and tried to do *méké*, and dance like the big ones, to the great delight of its parents. When a Fijian woman carries her child, it invariably sits astride on her hip, her arm clasping its little body.

Yesterday Mr Langham was busy the livelong day examining candidates for baptism, and holding a quarterly meeting of school teachers, from all parts of the isle. Mrs Langham had charge of all the wives; so Mr Morey and his mother and sisters kindly came to fetch me in their boat, and took me to a very pretty village, called Mundoo, beside the sea, and backed by richly wooded cliffs. I got a sketch from a rocky headland, commanding a fine view; and the old chief of the village sat by me, watching my work with keen interest.

Easter Day.

Last Easter morning we embarked at Marseilles. What a busy, bustling day that was, — with all the inevitable fuss of a huge crowded ship starting on a long voyage! I cannot say that this has been a very quiet day, though peaceful enough.

There was a crowded early service in the church here; and after breakfast Mr Morey brought his boat and took us all to Mundoo, the pretty village I told you of. There Mr Langham held service, after which he returned here for the afternoon work. I had a most lovely walk with the Moreys, and arrived here in time for an English service. We are to embark to-morrow at dawn, so I will only add Good night.—Your loving sister.

I am quite sorry to leave Koro, and dear old Isaaki laments

our departure quite pathetically; but we are to visit all the villages round the coast, while the Jubilee takes a run to other isles, on some work for the mission.

NATAULOA, CHIEF TOWN IN THE ISLE NAIRAI,
April 21*st*.

We were ready before dawn, but had to walk a couple of miles along the coast to the point where the Jubilee was lying, and there found a native teacher, with his family and all their goods, waiting to be taken on board; and as there was only one tiny boat, it was 11 A.M. ere we sailed. Outside the reef there was a good deal of sea on, and we were both very sick all day, and could not get near Nairai. We spent a wretched night; for though there is a small cabin, it is so very stuffy that we prefer just lying on deck and making the best of it. At dawn we were still off the coast of beautiful Koro. We neared Nairai in the afternoon, but the wind fell, and we could not make the difficult passage through the reef, which is six miles from the island; so we had a second night lying on the deck, vainly seeking for a soft plank, and longing for the mats of the native houses. Happily the night was faultlessly lovely, and every cloud and star was mirrored in the glassy ocean. We lay watching the Southern Cross and the Great Bear; and Venus sank as Jupiter rose, casting long reflections of sparkling light. It does seem strange to look up night after night and see the old familiar stars, remembering how very nearly we are standing sole to sole,—at least we are within a week's run of New Zealand, which is the exact antipodes of Britain. You see we have gained twelve hours on you, and often think of you as just sitting down to breakfast when we are turning in for the night!

The singing at evening prayer on deck was actually pretty,—the Fijian teachers and the Rotumah crew having nice voices. Our captain (Martin by name) comes from Heligoland. His opinion of life in Fiji is not high. "Ay! it *is* the country for makeshifts!"

As the mention of our crew being Rotumans probably conveys no definite idea to your mind, I may as well mention that Rotumah is a little independent island lying by itself about three hundred miles to the north of Fiji, which is the nearest inhabited land.[1] It is a volcanic isle, with several long-extinct craters, now

[1] I believe the annexation of Rotumah to England has now been decided on.

clothed with rich vegetation. It has a population of about four thousand; but owing to the strong propensity of the people for a seafaring life, a large proportion of these are generally absent. They are a small race, and of a clear copper colour. The story of how the first tidings of Christianity were carried to this isle by Tongan teachers,—of the vigorous hold which the new faith quickly took—of the virulent persecution that ensued—of the strongly rooted determination with which the converts held their ground, so that, when first visited by a white teacher, it was found that half the population were already professed Christians, who eagerly hailed his coming,—this story, I say, is one of the most remarkable episodes in the progress of Christianity in any part of the world. So I looked on these Rotumah men with especial interest as representatives of this people.

The beautiful night wore away, and in the morning a kindly breeze sprang up and brought us straight to the passage, when, with a few tacks, we made this anchorage. The village is pretty enough, shadowed by large trees, actually on the shore; but the people seemed unhealthy, and the flies multitudinous, and the house prepared for us is buried in poor plantains, and is stuffy and damp.

After due inspection, we determined on sleeping in the large matted church, close to the teacher's house, offered us. Of course it is otherwise quite empty,—save for a pulpit adorned with white shells. So we curtained off one end of it and there slept in peace, while just beyond our screens, Mr Langham was holding a meeting of all the native teachers on the island,—such a fine sensible body of men. Next night there were four weddings, and so many friends assembled that we did not venture on rigging up our quarters till the very tedious ceremony was over,—tedious because of the amount of inquiry and cross-questioning involved, and dismally dark, as our one lantern was the sole light in the large dark church. So many strangers assembled from other villages that the teacher's house, where we were by way of living, was crammed; so we had our breakfast in church, where I am now writing to you while waiting till the Jubilee is ready to sail,—the delay being caused by shipping the native minister and all his family, who go to another isle. We brought their successors with us. Also we take half-a-dozen lads, whose parents give them to the mission for special training at one of the institutions; then if they prove to be good stuff they will be promoted to the training college, and gradually advance to be teachers, and perhaps eventually native

ministers in charge of large districts. The organisation is most perfect, and spreads like a web over every remote corner of the isles, always excepting the still heathen mountain districts.

The work of a native teacher is no sinecure. To begin with, he may be sent to a distant island, where the dialect is so different from his own that he has to begin by learning the language of the people. In this the men of Bau have a great advantage over all others, their speech being the standard of pure Fijian, in which, consequently, the Scriptures are published, so they are understood by all the people; but the Bau men are themselves sometimes sorely puzzled, just as you might be if addressed in broad Yorkshire or Somerset. There are about sixteen distinct dialects spoken in the group, some of which are as different as Spanish is from Portuguese. Once appointed to a district, the teacher has to hold school three mornings a-week for children, three evenings for adults, one week-day service with address, two Sunday services with sermon, and early prayer-meeting in church. He must conduct daily morning and evening prayer in several houses; must visit the sick; pray and read the Scriptures with them; look after the people generally; bury the dead, and travel once a-week to report himself to the native minister, who perhaps lives at a considerable distance.

His pay varies from ten to twenty shillings, paid quarterly *in kind*. Should the value of the gifts exceed the sum to which he is entitled (decided by stewards in each village), the surplus, which may be a few shillings, goes to eke out the pay of a man in a poorer place. He is provided with a free house, and works in his own garden. His dinner is provided for him on Sunday. Once a-month an offering of food is made by the village, perhaps sufficient to last for a couple of days. And once a-year there may perhaps be an extra offering of yams.

A native minister is entitled to receive twenty-five shillings a-quarter, and possibly a hundred yams as his annual offering, but this is rarely paid in full. He is subject to the law of the Wesleyan Mission Society, which forbids a missionary to possess any land as private property, or to do any act of trade—*i.e.*, buying to sell again. The salary he receives from the Society is £5 a-year, which is raised to £15 after fifteen years' service. I think it may interest you to see a sample of the manner in which the quarterly contributions for teachers is paid. For instance, here is a table of the offertory in each village on the isle of Ngau, one of the richer districts. Others, such as the Ra coast, give much less. The sum

here represented is the quarterly salary of both native minister and schoolmaster.

Bottles of oil.	Pieces of native cloth.	Whales' teeth.	Hanks of sinnet.	Money.	Total value.
				s. *d.*	£ *s.* *d.*
2	12	9	8	16 0	1 10 0
—	7	—	—	—	0 3 6
5 gallons.	5	1	—	1 6	0 8 0
7	2	2	1 basket.	—	0 13 0
—	2	1	3	2 0	0 8 0
5 gallons.	12	—	2	—	0 15 0
—	1	3	2	12 6	0 18 0
1	1	7	—	6 0	0 15 0
—	2	4	1	8 0	0 15 0
3	4	6	—	15 6	1 3 0
3	1	2	—	6 0	0 8 0
—	1	—	1	6 6	0 7 0

I cannot say that a practical acquaintance with mission pay proves it to be of the very "fattening" character commonly supposed. All white missionaries, from the superintendent downwards, alike receive from the Society £180 per annum. For every child they are allowed £12, 12s. a-year till they are sixteen years of age, and an educational grant of £12, 12s. from eight till sixteen years. The Society pays the extra insurance premium charged for Fiji up to £500 (*i.e.*, £5 out of £16). And the insurance must be paid, being the sole provision for a widow. Thirty shillings a-year is allowed for medical stores for the whole family; and for these the natives are continually asking, and are never refused. £3 extra is given in the event of a confinement. No yam-garden is allowed, but a free house is furnished, and about £12 is allowed to keep up a boat and crew for mission purposes. Goods are delivered in Levuka freight free, and brought thence by the mission schooner Jubilee. After ten years' service a retiring pension of £40 a-year is allowed, rising to £60 after twenty years, when a gift of £50 is made to furnish a house. Forty years' service entitles a man to a pension of £140 a-year. A missionary may receive *no* offerings from the people for his own use. Marriage

and baptism fees, which are respectively 4s. and 1s., are all handed over to the general fund for circuit expenses, such as providing canoes, &c. The yams, &c., given at school examinations are given to poor teachers, or to the lads at the training institution. It is compulsory on every missionary to pay £6, 6s. a-year to the Superannuated Preachers' Fund, and £1, 1s. a-year to the Educational Fund. Servants must be clothed and fed, and constant gifts of cloth, medicine, &c., made to poor teachers and others.

You may judge from these particulars that a missionary's income is not on that excessively luxurious scale which you might suppose from reading the comments made by many travellers, who have been hospitably entertained at mission stations as much-honoured guests, for whom even the fatted calf has not been spared, and who (seeing the air of bright comfort and neatness prevailing around) have failed to give honour due to the careful and excellent housekeeping which could produce such admirable results with smaller means than are squandered in many a slatternly and slovenly household.

Many even make this comfort the text for a discourse on the superiority of the Romish missions, on the self-denial and ascetic lives of the priests, quite forgetting that in teaching such races as these, one of the most important objects is to give them the example of a happy loving home, bright with all pleasant influences of civilised life.

To me one of the strangest things here is the unaccountable jealousy of the missionaries, and their marvellous influence with the people, which pervades all classes of white men, old residents and new-comers alike. To understand the position, you must recollect that, forty years ago, two missionaries landed on these isles, to find them peopled by cannibals of the most vicious type. Every form of crime that the human mind can conceive reigned and ran riot; and the few white settlers here were the worst type of reprobates, who could find no other hiding-place; for the earliest founders of this colony were a number of convicts, who, about 1804, escaped from New South Wales, and managed to reach Fiji, where, by free use of firearms, they made themselves dreaded, and the chiefs courted them as useful allies in war So these desperadoes gained a footing in the isles, and amazed the Fijians themselves by the atrocity of their lives. One man, known as Paddy Connor, left fifty sons and daughters to inherit his virtues!

Such men as these had certainly not done much to smooth the way for Christian teachers; yet in the forty years which have

elapsed since the Wesleyan missionaries landed here, they have won over a population of upwards of a hundred thousand ferocious cannibals. They have trained an immense body of native teachers —established schools in every village. The people themselves have built churches all over the isles, each of which has a crowded congregation; and there is scarcely a house which has not daily morning and evening family prayer—a sound never heard in the white men's houses; and of course the old vile customs are dropped, and Christian manners take their place. Such is the system of supervision by the teachers, that any breach of right living must be at once known, and visited by the moral displeasure of those whom the people most respect.

This (and the fact that besides feeding and clothing the native teachers, each village once a-year contributes to the general support of the mission) is the ground which white men take as an excuse for decrying the excellent missionaries. You hear of "their inordinate love of power" and "greediness;" their excellent moral influence is simply "priestcraft;" and though the speakers are invariably compelled to acknowledge the good work they have hitherto done, I have actually heard men in high position (who have never been beyond Levuka, nor set foot in a native church) speak as if that work was now finished, and it was high time the contributions of the people should be diverted from the support of the mission to the Government treasury; in fact, as if every shilling paid to their teachers was so much of which Government is being defrauded. It is the old story of kicking over the ladder by which you have climbed. For most certainly, but for the missionaries and their work here, England would have had small share in Fiji to-day. A questionable gain, I confess! I must say I am greatly disgusted by the tone in which I hear this matter discussed, —not by any of our own party, however, for they, one and all, hold the mission in the very highest honour, and constantly attend the native services.

As you may possibly hear echoes of the anti-mission howl on the subject of ecclesiastical exactions, you may remember that it is invariably raised by men whose own poverty is certainly not due to the extent of their almsgiving; also that the actual working expenses of this great mission (with its 900 churches and 1400 schools, filled with ex-cannibals or their offspring) are between £4000 and £5000 a-year, a sum of which not above half has ever been collected in the isles, at the annual missionary meetings; and in no case is there any offertory in church. Of course, in the

earlier years the mission was entirely supported by England and the colonies, and Fiji gave no help at all; but, naturally, the parent society expects each fully established church to become self-supporting, and to do something in its turn to establish new missions in districts or isles yet more remote, that so the little grain may expand and become a wide-spreading tree.

CHAPTER XVII.

ISLE NGAU—MUD CRABS—ALBINOS—BATHING IN THE TROPICS—AN EARNEST CONGREGATION—A TYPICAL VILLAGE—FIJIAN STUDENTS—THE BURNT WATERS—A NARROW ESCAPE—WRECK OF THE FITZROY.

In a Teacher's House at Vanuaso,
Isle Ngau, *April* 26.

From Narai we had a fine run over to this isle, which is a land of high hills, deeply scored with valleys, wooded on one side, grassy on the other (at least apparently so, really covered with tall reeds). They look golden green as light misty showers pass over them while the sun shines. A gusty wind sprang up just as we made the passage, and entailed a good deal of beating before we could reach our anchorage off Sawaieke, which is the chief town on this island. We had some difficulty in landing, as the tide was low, leaving a broad expanse of mud; and the shore is fringed with mangrove, which always implies rather a swampy situation. We found cosy quarters in the house of Ratu Hosea, the native minister, a chief by birth, and a fine man (at present suspended from his office because he was so unfortunate as to box the ears of a very aggravating wife, who happened to die soon afterwards; so of course evil tongues gave him credit for having caused her death). In the church at Sawaieke all the beams are covered with *tappa*, with a pattern of large stars—very effective; and I was reminded of the "mortification boards" in Scotch kirks by seeing a regular churchwarden's record, stating that "the doors and windows of this church cost 3000 yams!"

I greatly enjoyed strolling along the shore here. A lovely path leads under great *eevie* trees and through groves of cocoa-palms, with young palms growing up so thickly under them as to form a network of fronds, with an undergrowth of tall grasses, casting a

light shade, through which the sunlight flickered. All along the shore are little streams with muddy banks, perforated with holes made by tiny crabs, prettier than those we saw at Suva. Besides those with the one large scarlet claw, we saw some with black back, green-spotted, others with scarlet back and black body, some black and green, with all their claws and legs scarlet, and some with bits of blue and white—most fascinating little creatures. We caught some, in spite of the marvellous rapidity with which they vanished.

Starting at early dawn in a big canoe, the men poled us along the coast to the next village, Navukailange, which was less muddy than the last, but the surroundings less pretty. A picturesque crowd had assembled for the school examination; and a multitude of pigs of all colours and ages, with infant broods, pervaded the village, grunting cheerily. The same afternoon we visited two other villages. The tide was too low to allow the canoe to take us, so we walked along the beautiful shore by a good path, through rich wood, till we reached Vione. It was quite dark when we arrived, and we were very weary, but we went straight to the church, and there lay down to rest in peace, and presently the canoe arrived, having poled through the mangrove-swamp. A light was brought us, just a wick in an old sardine-box, and we made a cup of tea, without milk of course, and then the canoe brought us here, where we found good quarters in a teacher's house, close by the sea, but were kept awake by a poor child coughing violently all night. All the coast hereabouts is covered with mangrove, forming a dense bush, intersected by salt-water creeks or rivers. The villages are built close to the water, and having this dense grove all around them, and no circulation of air, the heat is always very great, and mosquitoes, flies, and sand-flies abound.

On this island we have seen three albinos, which, happily, are very rare objects. Even a sun-browned European face looks pale and lacking colour among these rich sienna and madder hues, but these poor creatures are truly hideous. The first I saw was a boy about eighteen years old; his flesh was pale pink, blotched on the shoulders, and his hair a very pale yellow, and eyes very weak. He was an unwholesome, naked-looking object, suggestive of a poor hermit-crab dragged out of its shell. Poor fellow! he shrank greatly from notice, and had clothed himself in all the fringe garments he could collect, partly because the white skin suffered so severely from exposure to the sun. The next albino I saw was a child, which might almost have been mistaken for a European, but it was purely Fijian. Of course half-castes exist, but they are not

very numerous. The third albino was a woman of quite a natural white, with very fair hair, and pale-blue eyes. She was a Kai Tholo, and had blue tattooing round her mouth, but really was not an unpleasant object to look at. She seemed to have a natural attraction to her white sisters, and came about us constantly. She gave me a prettily woven basket, and seemed much gratified when I presented her with some bright green calico, evidently perceiving that it was becoming to her fair colouring. I am told that in one instance albino twins were born—a boy and a girl—much whiter than English children—and both grew up. We occasionally see men suffering from a form of leprosy which blanches the feet and hands. Though by no means "as white as snow," the contrast with the brown body is very marked and horrible.

THE TEACHER'S HOUSE AT LAMITI,
ISLE NGAU, OR ANGAU, *April* 27.

I am writing this letter in fragments,—just a few lines at a time —while waiting for our starts; and as we depend wholly on the tide, these are sometimes most inconvenient. Thus at the present moment, 8 P.M., we would fain be rigging up our mosquito-curtains in the large clean house which has been our home for the day. But, alas! Mr Langham has accumulated such a pile of work—church service, teachers' meeting, school examinations, marriages, and baptisms,—to get through to-morrow at the next large town, that, to my unspeakable disgust, he cannot venture on waiting for the morning tide, so we have to do about fourteen miles' poling in a canoe to-night, in total darkness, along a coast which by daylight is quite lovely. Besides, we are pretty well tired to begin with, having been up long before sunrise, and finished breakfast by 7 A.M., to catch this morning's tide; and having got here before 9 A.M. have ever since been hanging about, looking at the village, the shore, schools, and quaint scholars (from tiny toddles to grown-up men and women), all more or less picturesquely dressed up, some with gauze-like *tappa* worn over Turkey-red, with tufts of crimson or blue dyed fibre in the hair.

While the Langhams were at a long church service, I stole off for a bathe, but to-day was eminently unsuccessful in my quest, from foolishly taking the advice of some Fijian women, whose ideas of bliss in this respect are not ours, publicity being no drawback. You really can hardly realise what an enchanting feature in our travels is our daily bath. No humdrum tub, filled by a

commonplace housemaid, but a quiet pool on some exquisite stream, sometimes a clear babbling brook, just deep enough to lie down full length, beneath an overarching bower of great tree-ferns and young palm-fronds, all tangled with trailing creepers, and just leaving openings through which you see peeps of the bluest of skies, and tall palms far overhead. And sometimes the stream widens into a broad deep pool without a ripple, lying in the cool shade of a group of *eevie* trees, which are the commonest foliage here, like grand old walnut-trees. Conceive the delight of coming on such a stream after a couple of days on board ship, or after escaping from a dark Fijian house crammed with people, who, having presented various trays of steaming food, vegetables, fish, &c. (yesterday we had four pigs roasted whole, and two turtle, the latter invariably nasty), deem themselves rewarded by sitting down deliberately to enjoy a long fixed stare at the white pigs eating! Imagine, I say, escaping from this stew—and getting hotter still by a scramble in the grilling sun—and then following up the stream till you find a pool perfect in all respects, especially one with a waterfall just big enough to sit under, and therein plunging and rejoicing as you only can in water so warm as this! Of course, we are not always burdened with bathing-gowns, but a bathing-towel and a large white umbrella form an excellent substitute; and Mrs Langham has a Fijian girl whom we generally set to watch just in case of any chance wanderer, and then we each choose a bath after our own heart. But sometimes I come on such irresistible pools when I am scrambling about alone, where the tall reedy grasses are matted with large-leaved convolvuli, and not a sound is heard save the ripple of the stream over the stones, or the rustle of the leaves in the faint breeze, that I just slip in and revel, and go on my way rejoicing. I need scarcely say that our toilet on these expeditions is not very elaborate. Will you be shocked if I add, that having two or three ripe oranges, just gathered from the tree, greatly enhances the delight of the situation?

Saturday Night, April 29.

Well, we did start soon after eight, and passed five miles of coast, with just enough glimmer of light to see that it was unusually lovely; and even the boatmen (half-a-dozen fine stalwart fellows), mostly teachers, who volunteered to pole the canoe, told me how beautiful it was. But it was very dangerous coasting, with the reef close inshore, and large breakers just beyond us. The canoe rolled so that we had to hold on by both hands; and I confess to

a malicious feeling of delight when the men owned they did not like it, and said they would rather wait for daylight. So we landed close to a tiny village, and made our way by the light of a lantern to the first house, where we found women, and a fire, and a welcome, but it was so small that we were glad indeed to find a tiny church close by. Here we had a cup of tea, with old cocoa-nut grated and squeezed instead of cream, and then rigged up mosquito-curtains. It was so tiny, that my green plaid hung across the middle just divided it into two wee rooms; and the doors were so low that we had to stoop double to crawl in.

I woke in time to see a rosy sunrise over the sea, and walked alone along the coast till I found a delicious stream and a real "green-room" of leaves to dress in. Then we had breakfast on the shore (under palm-trees and broad-leaved plantains for a canopy), with the addition of yams and a fowl, brought by an admiring circle of villagers. And afterwards, according to invariable custom, "family" prayers before starting, as we also have at night, wherever we are,—sometimes on the deck, becalmed, in perfect moonlight, sometimes on the shore, oftenest in the house where we sleep; but in any case it is always interesting, were it only as a sight, when you see these very devout people, and remember how recently they were all cannibals. Even now we have adult baptisms at almost every island we come to. For though the people abjured heathenism *en masse*, and placed themselves under instruction, they are only baptised after careful individual training; in some cases not till they have been under tuition for four or five years.

How well this system works you might infer could you see the crowd of earnest thoughtful-looking men and women who assemble at Holy Communion. Last Sunday the morning congregation was about 600, of whom 250 were communicants; and in the afternoon the service was repeated at a village three miles off, where there were about 100 more communicants. According to native custom, all the women sit on one side and the men on the other. The service is almost a literal translation from the English Prayer-Book (it is all Wesleyan here). The elements used are Fijian bread, generally of arrowroot and cocoa-nut, and for wine, the very weakest claret and water, it being illegal to give a drop of wine or spirits to any native—and the penalty is severe. It is a marvel whereat I never cease to wonder, to know what this whole race was, less than twenty years ago, and now to see what a fine race of kindly helpful people they are. I often think of this, when perhaps a dozen of them volunteer to escort me on any walk or

scramble I plan, and of their own accord cut or trample my path through the tall reeds up the steepest hillside, and carefully help me over the innumerable streams, which are generally bridged by one slippery cocoa-nut stem. Of course my being with the missionary party accounts for their being all on the alert to be useful. Here, for instance, all the twenty native teachers of the island (we are now on Ngau), and as many more stewards, and a number of lay-preachers and female class-leaders, have assembled for their quarterly meeting, and the place is full of them. The result is an unusual crowd in the house, and a hideous amount of eating of yams and pig, in honour of this great occasion. It is all in the way of work, however; and, of course, to the people of these isles (where there is not one white resident) the mere pleasure of sitting staring at us, watching us eat and so forth, is a never-ending amusement.

Naturally we sometimes get very much bored by it; and it is a triumphant moment when we contrive to give them the slip, and get away to some quiet stream for our bathe, as aforesaid. Sometimes two or three really pretty girls come with us to show us the way, and help us to scramble over the boulders, and then to keep watch that no one else may come near. I daresay they themselves manage to get a peep at the strange white creatures; but we watch them in their turn, and the gain is, I fear, undoubtedly on their side. Many of them would delight an artist, being really pretty, with lovely figures, only veiled by a short kilt of creamy white native cloth, and perhaps over that a fringe and necklace of green leaves, thrown over one shoulder and under the other. Perhaps they carry a large fern or plantain-leaf as umbrella, and as they skip over the grey boulders every attitude is a picture. To-night I wish them all safe at home.

We are now at a village called Nougouloa—*i.e.*, Black Sand. It is a very pretty tiny town, circular, with double ramparts and double moats, which in these peaceful days are used as *taro* beds. A very large number of the inhabitants died in the measles—in some instances whole families; and they were buried where they lay, on the foundation of their houses, which were pulled down: and now patches of crimson-leaved dracæna, growing on the raised terraces, mark these "graves of a household." Most of the little burial-grounds are pretty and well cared for: they are generally shaded by the *noko-noko*[1]—a dark, drooping foliage, which just now is covered with dainty little pink tassels, like our own larch tree. The great screw-pines, with the odd white pillared roots, are also

[1] *Casurina.*

now in blossom, and bear a tuft of very fragrant flowers in a case of white leaves.

Wednesday, May 3.

We are back at Sawaieke, and to-morrow morning return on board the Jubilee, taking away several lads as students. All their friends have come to see them off; and at the present moment no less than fourteen visitors of all ages and sexes are lying on the mats like herrings in a barrel, and have been gazing at us so steadily that at last they are fairly mesmerised, and have all fallen asleep, and of course will not stir till morning; so we shall have a chorus of grunting and coughing all night. The coughs are really dreadful; Mr Langham has to doctor the people right and left,—rather expensive work, and each missionary is only allowed 30s. a-year for medical stores!

NASOVA, *May 20.*

I wrote so far before leaving Ngau. We got on board early, and a very unpleasant morning it was—raining steadily.

All the relations came to the shore to weep over the emigrants starting for the Bau Training Institution—a very short day's sail by canoe. They all blubbered freely (great big men), and smelt one another all over! Up to this time we had been coasting all about the isles of Koro, Ngau, Nairai, and Batique—the two former large and very beautiful, reminding me much of Ceylon. The mission ship, the Jubilee, took us from isle to isle, and then we coasted round from village to village in a canoe. As I have previously told you, each island is surrounded by an outer ring of coral-reef, so there is invariably smooth water right round the island where you can row or sail in perfect comfort. Of course it is very dangerous for the boats, as coral crops up in all manner of unexpected patches; and at low tide it is impossible in some places to get along. But at high tide you can always do so; and right round the coast there are picturesque villages at intervals of four or five miles, so we halted perhaps two nights at all the chief points—having previously sent word to the three or four nearest towns to assemble there for church service, school examinations, marriages, and baptisms. Of course there is apt to be a certain sameness in these; but as I was not bound to attend them, I often took advantage of the people being all occupied to go off for a quiet bathe or sketch. Many of the open-air services were most picturesque, being held under the great trees—sometimes by torch-

light; and the school-gatherings are very pretty sights—the dresses being so fanciful. A large proportion of the scholars read and write well, and are getting on wonderfully with arithmetic,—especially in one village, where a poor leper, who in early life was trained at the Mission Institute, now employs himself as amateur assistant to the teacher. I have bought two very nice pieces of native cloth, which acted as christening-robes to two juveniles; the font was a cocoa-nut shell.

There is generally a lovely path running right round every island, close to the sea shore, under shadow of large trees with grand foliage, but of names unknown to you.

We spent May-day at a town called Nawaikama—the Burnt Waters,—because of the hot springs. These are built in artificially, with a low wall, so as to confine them and form a warm pool. A beautiful cool stream divides just above the springs, and flows right round them; so when you have sat in the pool till you are parboiled (and, by the way, it is a very odd sensation to feel the hot water gushing up), you can take a plunge, or at least lie down and cool in the cold fresh stream close by. It is a pleasant bath-room, with tall palms for a canopy.

The only place where we came in for any interest rather out of the humdrum ordinary of Fijian villages was the little island of Batique, where it had been impossible to send word of the coming of the great ecclesiastical powers; and as there is no anchorage, and dangerous reefs, the vessel had to beat about outside all the time we were there. So we only stayed one night, and on arriving found the whole town in a fever of excitement (a town is a small moated village), because the young women of Levuka had come over by appointment to bring a great present of English cloth to the chief, and to the women of Batique. Of course they expected mats, and painted cloth, and cocoa-nut oil in return; so all the Batique girls had been working for ages. We arrived just as the presentation of goods was about to be made. All the people assembled in the market-place—a square, overshadowed by great trees on raised banks—and then every woman brought the mat she had made, rolled up so as to show its bright edge of worsted (modern substitute for the parrots' feathers of olden days). There were about 200 mats, and a good deal of fine painted cloth. After whales' teeth had been duly presented to the chief, the presents were made, and much feasting ensued. It was a singularly inopportune time for the mission work; but as it had to be then or not at all, Mr Langham proceeded to hold service in the big

HOT SPRINGS, ISLE NGAU.

p. 180.

square, and when that was over, had his school examination by moonlight and torchlight. The scene was picturesque, though the scholars had no time to make their usual wreaths and garlands. One pretty feature of such gatherings as these is, that at the close of the ceremony all come and lay their (superfluous) garments of native cloth and necklaces at the feet of the principal persons present. I only mean pretty theoretically — for of course the wearers look stripped and shabby after this, but the followers of the great men assume the garments thus laid down. It was ten o'clock before we left the square and betook us to our quarters in the little church, at either end of which we had hung up our curtains. Then we found there was a marriage to celebrate, so Mr L. went on with that in the middle of the church, while his wife and I slept the sleep of the weary—slept for a little while, soon to be awakened by the shouts and measured hand-clapping (like low thunder) of the crowd, who had again assembled in the market-place for a grand *mélé*—dancing and singing—which went on the livelong night. At last it became so boisterous I thought I must go down and see the fun; so crept near under the shadow of the great plantain-leaves—but soon an envious gleam of moonlight revealed my presence, which caused some perturbation. I fancied I was less welcome than usual. The dancing I saw was commonplace, and not pretty, so I soon went back to bed. This was the end of my adventures.

Next day found us at Bau, the native capital, where, you know, I have already stayed with the Langhams; and the following morning a favourable wind brought me here in three hours (last time I was fourteen hours). Everything is fresh and cosy. Already Nasova is like a different place—tidy garden, and pretty things all about, and my own room does look so very nice with all its Fijian decorations. But of the humans, I found only Lady Gordon and the chicks, and Baron von Hügel, the others having gone in three different detachments, with all the native police, to reinforce the camp already established in the great isle; for there has been mischief brewing for long, and at last the wild heathen mountaineers, Kai Tholos, have made a descent on several Christian villages, burnt the houses, and murdered the inhabitants—chiefly old men, women, and children, who had hidden in a cave. The Christians made a good defence, and in one place thoroughly beat the aggressors. It is a nasty business anyhow; but we trust it is nearly over now. However, no one can tell, and of course every one is anxious.

I return to find that a home worry has arisen. The nice Welsh nurse is actually going to marry the Spanish washerman, and as Lady Gordon had not bound her legally to stay, she has no redress! Luckily, Mrs Abbey is willing to undertake the place, in addition to her own already heavy work, though she has two children of her own. Such an accident is really a serious matter in a place like this, where good servants cannot possibly be replaced.

We have just heard of the total wreck of the steamer Egmont, which brought us here from Sydney. You may remember that she was specially chartered to bring the Royal Engineers to this place. Colonel Pratt and almost all his men have gone to Suva to open up a road into the interior of the great isle. There seems a fate, however, about the removal of the capital. Nothing can be done till the best harbours have been surveyed; and the survey was stopped three months ago, in obedience to an imaginary law of hurricanes, and the surveying ship Reynard, Captain Dawson, sent back to the colonies. Now he returns only to have a relapse of severe illness as soon as he enters Fijian waters, and has to go straight away again. But it is time something was done. This place, "in which fever and sunstroke are unknown," is just a sink of low fever—one case after another. Both Dr Cruikshank[1] and Dr Carew have had it very severely. The latter (attached to the Engineers) has been sent to the colonies to recruit. It is said that till three years ago it really was unknown—now it is making up for lost time.

Such a sad thing has just happened here. The captain of the new Government steamer Fitzroy had five children whom he adored: three died, and he had to leave his delicate wife and two remaining children in Sydney. News came that the two last children had died, but he had one point of comfort in the coming of his wife. He was to meet her at Khandavu (where the mails stop, a day's steam from here). Instead of herself, came a letter from the doctor to say she was dying at Sydney. The poor fellow utterly lost his head, left his ship, and went off to Sydney. Luckily a passenger on board had been in the navy, and managed to bring the steamer safely back here, where a new captain has been found. We have just heard that Lady Hackett is very ill with low fever, and are going off to see her. Really there is no end to the amount of sickness here at present.

[1] I regret to have to add the name of Dr Cruikshank to the number of those who have passed away in their prime. He died at Levuka in 1880.

FIJI, *May* 20, 1876.

DEAR EISA.—I have just got safe home from my cruise about Koro, Ngau, Nairai, and Batique. I have one new fern—quite new to Mrs Langham and myself, but Baron von Hügel knows it, he thinks, in New Zealand. Most of the others, I think, I have already sent; but I think it well to go on sending seed [1] in case of previous packets having failed, or mildewed. The latter is the curse of this country, and nowhere is it a more cruel foe than in collecting plants. The Baron tells me he has collected in these isles upwards of 2000 specimens of all sorts of things (vegetable), and the mildew has destroyed about four-fifths of the whole!

This comes home to me with especial force, in attempting to do Miss Bird's behest of collecting ferns for her. In any case the pursuit is to me a novel one, for I have always steadily set my face against all manner of dried plants, and vowed nothing would ever induce me to have anything to do with such. But in obedience to her command, I started the largest portfolio in all Fiji, to enable me to preserve at least small sections of the splendid giants which form the glory of these isles (but which to my utterly ignorant eye appear identical with those of Australia and New Zealand). But after all, what can the biggest portfolio do when you have to deal with fronds eight or ten feet long by four or five feet wide? You can only preserve a fragment, which gives you no notion of the lovely original. This is especially true of what I call the umbrella-fern, one frond of which will quite cover a sleeping man lying down full length. However, I did what I could—lugged about this horrid great portfolio everywhere, full of blotting-paper and drying-paper, and most conscientiously preserved all the loveliest things I could get. I never knew before how long you have to search among the ferns (which as a whole look so beautiful) before you can get one quite perfect, especially one in seed. And I invariably found such when we were on some difficult scramble, with enough to do to get along with hands and feet; or else when we were hurrying on to catch a tide, with the prospect of a long row in either the canoe or a tiny boat, under a grilling sun; and generally, on reaching our destination, found the great portfolio and other superfluities all gone on board the ship, ready for the morrow's start. Even when it was there all right, and the last hour of daylight devoted to the attempt to save the half-withered treasures of

[1] I sent home seed, or morsels of seed-bearing frond, of many rare and beautiful ferns, but notwithstanding all the care bestowed on them by experienced gardeners, I do not believe that one has survived the voyage.

the day, there was invariably the mortification of finding those of the previous days covered with mildew—often the small fronds fairly dropping off. And now that I have got back again, and look at the result, I find nothing but page after page of smelly mould, with shrunken brown corpses of bits of what were once ferns. I only got half-a-dozen sketches on this trip, and they are all mildewed. The scenery, however, is lovely. I had hoped to have found some ferns collected for me here by one or two people whom I had asked to help me, and who had agreed to do so. The majority whom I asked at once refused point-blank; others said, "I go, sir," and went not. All jeered at me, and congratulated me on my undertaking; some said "they had tried it once." All agreed that the only chance of success is to change all the papers at least every other day—a pleasant prospect truly! However, the upshot is that no one has as yet brought me one fern; and those I collected with so much care are just a mass of mildew, the very smell of which is sickening. So you must tell Miss Bird, that though for love of her I will stick to the attempt, all I have done so far is utterly worthless.

We have had a son of Mr Veitch, the seedsman, here lately. He worked hard at ferns for some months, and though much disappointed at getting nothing new, contrived with infinite trouble to collect many lovely things, all of which are now at the bottom of the sea, he having got wrecked on one of his expeditions—very trying!

Tell your mother I have never yet had a chance of despatching her pottery, but it is greatly to her advantage, as I have gone on picking up bits here and there, and the case now contains nearly double as many specimens as when I first wrote to her. Mail closing—so good-bye.

NASOVA, *June* 3.

If a heavenly climate, with balmy breezes, could make us happy, we are now enjoying these in perfection; but, alas! we are very down-hearted. It seems as if all our friends were forsaking us. We went yesterday to say good-bye to the Layards, he having been appointed Consul in New Caledonia. I shall miss them exceedingly. Their house was always an attractive point for a walk, which was invariably rewarded by seeing some interesting specimen of ornithology, or learning some point in natural history, on which Mr Layard is a first-rate authority. Our last afternoon together was devoted to an awful and solemn experiment. We resolved

that we must bring ourselves to taste Bêches-de-mer soup (you know about the horrible-looking black sea-slugs, so precious to the Chinese, and which are so largely exported from here?). Well, Mr Layard commissioned Houng Lee, a Chinaman living in Levuka, to make a large tureen of this soup, and bring it to his house at luncheon-time. Very dubiously did we venture on the first spoonful; on the second still with caution: on the third with avidity. Finally, we forgot all about the hideous slugs, and with one accord returned for a second helping, and agreed that we had thoroughly enjoyed our luncheon. Now, alas! all our pleasant experiments are over—the big tumble-down old house, with the familiar pier, are deserted; and at this very moment the Layards are in the act of sailing out of harbour in H.M.S. Barracouta.

But grievous beyond expression to Lady Gordon and myself is the fact that the Havelocks have decided on returning to England. You, surrounded by friends without number, cannot possibly realise to what an extent we shall miss these, our very greatest friends. There has scarcely been a day of which we have not spent part together—either we have gone up to their pretty cottage on the hill, or they have come to us for a pleasant chat. And Jack and Nevil are devoted to their dear little Rachel. Well, now it is all over. Already they are beginning preparations for selling off their furniture, and their very pretty glass and china,—of course at a heavy loss; and next month they will sail with Sir William and Lady Hackett, and all go home together. Our new Chief-Justice, Mr Gorrie, is expected by next mail. He comes from Mauritius.

Now as concerns news since I last wrote. For a fortnight we continued here alone—Baron von Hügel being our only gentleman. He is "getting up" Fiji, and competes with Sir Arthur and Mr Maudslay for the most thoroughly perfect collection of curiosities. All the others were away in detachments in the mountains of Viti Levu, where the wild tribes are in rebellion. The Governor could not rest so far from the seat of action, so went off with Mr Maudslay. We expected them back about the 16th May, but waited and waited in vain, in much anxiety. At last they steamed quietly in, and came in with the usual calm assumption of nothing of the slightest interest having occurred. I hear, however, that they ran into imminent danger, and escaped by a hair's-breadth. The Governor insisted on walking across country from Nandi to Nandronga, about forty miles, attended only by Dr Macgregor and about a dozen native police. Nandronga is a town in the disturbed districts, where Arthur Gordon is now staying. Of course

it was a long two days' march; and the first night, the party halted at a village, without in the least realising that they had run straight to one of the scenes of action. In the houses they found only four or five helpless old men, all the rest having gone to fight. A sudden blaze revealed that the enemy had surprised, and were in the act of burning, the next village, two miles off, and of course the villagers immediately expected to share the like fate. Great was the consternation; and a council was held by Sir A. and the doctor whether to retreat at once, and retrace their steps, or advance many miles to the nearest plantation. Happily they decided to stay where they were, the available handful of men standing sentry round the village the whole night, watching for prowlers coming to burn the reed houses. Evidently the enemy were put off by finding them on the alert; for only one prowler came suddenly on a sentry, and instantly vanished in the darkness. Had they realised what a prize lay within their grasp, I think they would not have let that village escape. At dawn the march was continued—in fear and trembling, however; for it is not pleasant to know that these tribes are still cannibals. Sir Arthur also went himself to the camp at Nasauthoko, where Captain Knollys and his native police have their headquarters

NASOVA, *June* 9.

We had a very curious ceremony here this afternoon. A large body of our wild allies have arrived here from Bau on their way to Viti Levu, and to-day they came here to report themselves to Sir Arthur, and indulged in a little *bole bole*, which is a form of ceremonial boasting, to describe the great deeds of prowess they purpose to perform in the war. They are a magnificent body of men; and as they advanced, with blackened faces and kilts of long black water-weed like horse-hair, and streamers of white *masi* floating from their arms and knees, brandishing their old Tower muskets, which replace the club of old days, they certainly did look most alarming. They performed a very striking "devil *méké*," with wild attitudinising, ending with such unearthly yells as would really have made your blood run cold to hear, and were very suggestive of what these people must have been in old heathen days.

When the wild men had received their gift of whales' teeth, and had gone off to feast on turtle and pig, we went on board H.M.S. Pearl, which sailed into harbour under full canvas on Monday evening just at sunset. The last time she left this harbour was on the ill-fated expedition to Santa Cruz. It is not yet a year

since I left Commodore Goodenough's hospitable roof, and watched the Pearl sail out of Sydney harbour, bringing Sir Arthur to begin the new life in Fiji. Then came her awful return. Now we hear that she has been the scene of a series of brilliant balls, given by Commodore Hoskyns at Sydney. Verily changes are rapid!

It was a great pleasure again to meet Captain Hastings and other friends. Dr Messer has been too ill to come ashore, but to-day he showed me some very interesting sketches of the New Hebrides idols, and other things. In the absence of its new occupant, we ventured to enter the cabin in which the sailor-martyr died—holy ground indeed. The Pearl sails again to-morrow.

I have just been to see Mrs Macgregor. Both she and Mrs Garrick are very seriously ill from frightfully ulcerated sore-throat. Captain Stewart, R.E., has a sharp attack of fever; and Mr Lake has just been invalided to New Zealand. Sir William Hackett is quite laid up, and looks very ill indeed; Nevil, too, is very feverish. Altogether we are not in a very flourishing condition.

Nothing amuses me more than the way in which people from opposite ends of the world are for ever meeting in unexpected places. The last instance I have come across was when two days ago I was sketching near Levuka, and took refuge from a shower at a carpenter's shop. There I found a very old woman from Perthshire, who discoursed at great length on all members of the Breadalbane family, and the Baillies of Jarviswode, as she remembered them thirty-five years ago. It reminds me of my meeting General Troup in India, and his telling me he knew all my family intimately. But when we failed to find our topics of common interest altogether fluent, he added, "Well, it is fifty years since I have seen any of them!"

I have nothing else of special interest to tell you. History repeats itself in so small a community. A considerable number of white men and brown have been dining here. There have been yangona *mékés* in the moonlight, with wild songs, which are always attractive to me. We had a pretty *méké*, with fanciful dances, in honour of the Queen's birthday (the Maramma Levu, or Great Lady). Jack, the little sailor, has been in his glory with so many ships in harbour—the Sapphire, the Alacrity, and the Pearl. He has had luncheon and tea on board of them all, and is an immense favourite with the blue-jackets. His naval tailor comes gravely to measure him for his tiny garments; and his proudest days are those when he is allowed to go on board alone with one of the gentlemen. Mrs Abbey has planted tree-ferns round Mrs de Ricci's grave; and there are few days when either her children, or Jack and Nevil, do

not carry fresh flowers to lay on it. And I have sown scarlet and blue convolvulus, and other vines, all over the little headland. Good-bye.

NASOVA, *July* 22.

. . . . . Our grievous separation is accomplished. The Havelocks and Hacketts started for England on the 6th, and, to know how sorely we miss them, you must needs come and live out here—in this country, to which most people come, only to leave it as soon as possible, and which has been accurately described as one in which every difficulty in the way of progress exists in fullest perfection. Why this should be, I really cannot tell, but it certainly appears to be the case.

The mountain war continues, and Captain Knollys, as generalissimo, is permanently absent; all the other gentlemen come and go incessantly. The new judge, Mr Gorrie, accompanied Sir Arthur on his last trip, just to see something of the mountain tribes before they become civilised, like those of the coast. They returned here on the 3d, bringing Arthur Gordon in the well-earned character of "Conquering Hero," he having, with a force of 1000 wild men, effectually quelled the disturbance in the district under his charge. Next day the Vuni Valu came here to lunch, and Maafu to dine. Both were anxious to hear all news of the war, but each great chief was happier in the absence of the other.

A few days later a very fine body of picked men arrived here from Taviuni and Thakaundrove on their way to the scene of action. They did a war *méké* on the green in front of the windows, and repeated the odd ceremony of "boasting," which I have described in previous letters. On the 10th, the Governor, Mr Gordon, and his reinforcement of wild men, sailed in the Fitzroy to rejoin Captain Knollys, and now we are anxiously waiting for her return to take us across to Suva on a visit to Mrs Joski.

July 25.—We waited in vain. Yesterday Mr Wilkinson arrived, having travelled five days and nights in an open canoe, to bring a message from Sir Arthur, who is in the camp at Nasauthoko, to the effect that the Fitzroy is a total wreck. She struck on a coral-reef near the Singatoke river, having mistaken the entrance into a passage. It was midnight, and the land clouded by much smoke from burning the reeds for clearings. Captain Coxe and his crew have arrived in the two boats. All hands safe; but he, poor fellow, is sorely down-hearted at this mischance, and it certainly is a serious loss to the colony.

July 28.—A letter from the Langhams to say the Jubilee will call here to-morrow, and if I like to go in her to Bau, I can join them in a cruise all round Vanua Levu (the Great Land), Taviuni, and other isles. Of course such a chance is not one to be lost, so I am busy getting ready for the expedition. Probably you will not hear from me till my return.

(Becalmed in mid-ocean—*i.e.*, about twenty miles from Taviuni, and the same from Vanua Levu.)

Wednesday, August 2, 1876.

My dear Lady Gordon, — Is not this "riling"? To think that we were due in Taviuni last Friday, and that we were thence to have taken Mr J., the new missionary, to a great meeting with all the teachers, and office-bearers of all sorts, on Vanua Levu (at Nanduri). This meeting is to come off to-day: about 150 teachers, &c., and ever so many friends, are there assembled, wondering what delays the Jubilee; and here we are, doing the Ancient Mariner business to perfection, and apparently likely to lie where we are for an unlimited period. Of course when we do reach Taviuni, we shall not be able to stay there at all,—only just pick up Mr J., and, if possible, row along the coast to Wairiki and Somo Somo to fetch a native minister, while the Jubilee beats round the coast. This row will give us a small glimpse of the coast, and so far, is the one redeeming feature of our cruise. It is aggravating to know that if the captain had not wasted all the early morning, the Langhams were ready on Saturday to row miles to meet the Jubilee, as soon as she appeared, and start at once for Taviuni. As it was, they sighted us so late in the day, that they decided on waiting till Monday morning, by which time the wind had changed, and we had it right in our teeth. Though we were up at 3 A.M., we only made Ovalau that day, and were off Nasova at sunset. I wonder if you saw us! Last night we were off Savu Savu, and would fain have landed to see the hot springs, but had to tack about remorselessly. Then came the calm; and all night long, we rolled and rolled. Now the rolling has ceased, and we are seesawing idiotically. Two consecutive nights have proved to me that the boards of the deck are undoubtedly hard; and till now Mrs Langham, little Annie Lindsay, and the Fijian girl Penina, the great Johnnie, and I myself, have all been horribly sick. Only Mr L. has been well. He is a very kind nurse; and it is quite touching to see how devoted both he and Mrs L. are to little Annie—a bright little five-year-old, full of life and fun, and

as fond of them as they are of her. She can talk nothing but Fijian, and is a great pet with the natives,—a most joyous little person, on terms of intimate friendship with all the live-stock at Bau — cats, ducks, geese, fowls, and little pigs. Tell Jack and Nevil the bottles of jujubes and acid drops are a great success, both with big folk and small. As yet the only excitement has been in feeble attempts at cookery. Yesterday, after a thirty-six hours' course of cold pork and dry bread (not feeling equal to those tins of mutton-broth), I bethought me of that long-treasured roll of Brand's brown soup, which has never left my travelling-bag, and cut up a couple of inches in thin slices, and boiled them in the tea-kettle. The result was capital. But in spite of all commands to scour the tea-kettle, it was found this morning thickly coated with brown jelly! Well, this morning we tried the first tin of condensed milk. I still think it makes tea nastier than having none, but little Annie and Mr L. like it. Then we thought we would make a mess of it and corn-flour. So Mr L. and I each tried our hand at making a bowl. I made mine like arrowroot, without boiling, and rather liked it; but his brew failed: so at last he found an old black pot belonging to the ship, and boiled it up. It looked rather dingy and odd, but they all avowed it was better than mine; so we were each content. The two big pieces of waterproof were very acceptable for our bedding.

I have no special Bau news to give you. Everything looked as usual — good bloom of roses and jessamine, and fresh sweet air. After morning church, I went to see Andi Kuilla, and gave her your message. She could not wait to talk then, as it seems they always hold a family prayer-meeting immediately after public service (having previously attended early service). I confess I thought that it showed wonderful powers of endurance. In the afternoon we went over to Viwa, where Mr L. held service, the Lindsays having gone to Namena. It is a very pretty place—a lovely walk of about a mile to the church; and beyond that the native graves, on a headland edged with big old trees, whose tangled roots twist right over the cliff down to the sea. Andi Kuilla came to evening tea, and to ask Mr L. for a copy-book, pen, &c., that she might improve her hand before writing you a Fijian letter herself. Ratu Timothy also sent up for lamp-wicks. There is scarcely an hour of the day that some member of the "royal family" does not send up for something or other. I found Mr L. had arranged that one of the native ministers, Ratu Isaiah, is to meet him on the coast of Viti Levu, about twenty miles from Nananu, and is to bring the

mail. So I gave him a note to Mr Maudslay, asking him to send my letters also. If I have the luck to be dropped at Nananu, Mr L. will get them sent on. Now I will add no more; for you have no notion how hateful it is to write on your lap, holding a big umbrella with one hand, and sea-sawing all the time. The faintest little breeze is just springing up, and we are beginning to move—almost imperceptibly.

VUNA POINT (NAVACA MISSION-HOUSE), 3 P.M.

Just arrived, by dint of literally *rowing* the Jubilee the last few miles,—such heavy mist and quiet rain that we could see nothing of the isle as we approached—only a vision of very high land and coast-line of rich foliage and fields. Instead of beach, coral and black rocks run to the very edge of the land. It seems so strange to see the branches of the trees literally overhanging the coral; and just beyond, the water is quite deep. The Lands Commission are living very near: we see their tents. Probably we shall walk along the coast so far, after tea, to see Colonel Pratt and the others. We sleep here, I am glad to say. No time for more. Much love to the bairns.—Ever yours.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TAVIUNI—TUI THAKOW—MISSIONARY PERILS—THEIR FRUIT OF PEACE—RATU LALA—RAMBI ISLE—GIPSY LIFE—VANUA LEVU—A MISSION CONFERENCE—THE ISLE OF KIA—A VILLAGE FEAST.

SOMO SOMO, ISLE TAVIUNI, *August* 4.

We had a very tedious passage coming here from Bau, but are now repaid by finding ourselves on this lovely island, which is generally called "the garden of Fiji," because of the richness of its vegetation. We have seen only a small part of the coast, but that is one lovely tangle of natural foliage, which, seen from the sea, resembles a succession of green waterfalls, so richly do the vines of every graceful form shroud the great trees and tall ferns. You see I have adopted the word vine in its colonial acceptation, to describe all manner of creeping green things of the earth.

Taviuni has one disadvantage—it lacks the perfect ring of coral

which secures calm water and a sure harbour for most of its neighbours; and in stormy weather the shore is swept by heavy seas, unchecked by any protecting barrier-reef. It is about sixty miles in circumference, and is apparently one great mountain, about 2000 feet high. It is said to be an extinct volcano. On its summit lies a great lake which has formed in the crater, and thence descends in a clear stream, which flows into the sea at this village.[1]

We landed at Vuna Point, and were thankful to find ourselves safely housed at the mission station. How we did enjoy a jug of fresh milk sent to us by a kind neighbour! The houses of several planters are here clustered within a very short distance of one another, making quite a pleasant little society. We called at several houses, each surrounded by orange-trees, scarlet hybiscus, gardenia, and other tropical shrubs, with veils of a tiny scarlet convolvulus; and we passed through a bit of the primeval forest —noble old trees with wonderful roots forming natural buttresses. Alas! they are all doomed to destruction. Here, as in every other beautiful corner of the earth which I have ever visited, the glories of the natural forest are rapidly vanishing before the planter's axe, to make room for a more profitable, if less interesting vegetation.

In the evening there was heavy rain, of which, I believe, this green isle receives a plentiful allowance. Happily yesterday morning was fine, and (while the Jubilee slowly beat up the coast to Wairiki, a distance of twelve miles) we took the boat and rowed close inshore. It was very lovely. Wairiki is one of the few spots in Fiji where the Roman Catholic Church has established something of a footing; and it is the home of two French priests, whose care extends to Somo Somo. The *lotu katolika*, however, has comparatively few adherents, the people in general having a strong preference for what they call the *lotu ndina*—"the true religion"—which, however, in this place seemed to be in a slovenly condition. We found the house of the native minister so unpleasant that we did not care to enter it, but made our way to the very ill-cared-for little church, and had our luncheon brought there, as it was raining heavily. We were now in the dominions of the great chief Tui Thakow, a very fine specimen of a high chief,

[1] Since writing the above, I have seen two springs of pure cold water on the summit of the dormant volcano of Fuji Yama, in Japan, at an altitude of about 13,000 feet; also those in Haleakala, the great extinct volcano in the Sandwich Isles—altitude 10,000 feet—whence it would appear to be the nature of extinct volcanoes to produce such springs.

second only to Thakombau, but, unfortunately, much addicted to drinking and other vices. Though affording kindly protection to both Catholic priests and Wesleyan teachers, he eschews the guidance of either, and scandalises both, by pursuing his own jovial views of domestic life, and keeping up as large an establishment as in the old heathen days—the ladies of his harem being practically without limit. His first queen, Andi Eleanor, is at present out of favour, and lives at Wairiki in a very picturesque house, of which I made a sketch when the rain stopped. She had some enormous bales of native cloth lying in the house. She is still very handsome, as is also her son Ratu Lala, whom I often see at Mr Thurston's house.

In the afternoon we had a heavy pull, rowing out to the Jubilee, and found her at anchor, the captain objecting to proceed that night, as the coral-patches make navigation dangerous in the dark. This delighted me, of course. So after some deliberation it was decided that we should row on to this place, Somo Somo, about four miles further, taking our food and bedding, as we were utterly uncertain where we should sleep, there being no teacher's house there. But news of our coming preceded us, and on landing we were at once conducted to this very fine large house belonging to Tui Thakow. He himself is absent (supposed to be drunk at a neighbouring village), but Andi Luciana, the Fair Rosamond who at present fills the position of chief wife, and who is a daughter of Thakombau, did the honours with the innate dignity of her race. She is a fine handsome woman, with a very pleasant face. She is Andi Kuilla's half-sister. Her first matrimonial venture was with Koroi Ramundra, at Bau—notwithstanding her sister's warning, she having also tried him in the first instance, and found him unendurable. Andi Luciana rued the day too late, but the Vuni Valu came to the rescue, and divorced her, and then allowed her to come and be prime favourite in Tui Thakow's harem.

We went to call on Tui Thakow's sister, Andi Eliza, a fine hearty old lady—the great pillar of the Wesleyan Church in this district. She cordially smelt all our hands, sniffing with especial devotion that of the newly-arrived missionary, a man who had never in his life been twenty miles from his own home in Cornwall, when he was appointed to the sole charge of this immense district, where there are vast arrears of lost ground to be made up. Fifty towns without any teacher at all! For some time there has been no one to undertake the charge of this district, and now the Society have sent out the only man they could get, but one who, certainly, is

not very likely to impress these keen intelligent men; which is the more to be regretted, as they are so ready to give all honour to their white teacher and his message.

This is a very pretty place, and after tea we strolled out again to see as much of it as we possibly could, first going through the village, and then exploring the valley behind us.

We lingered a while beside the clear stream, resting under a large shaddock-tree, the whole air scented with its fragrant flowers, which are just like a very rich orange-blossom, and grow in large clusters. Then turning aside beneath the dark shadow of the bread-fruit trees, we sought the grave of Mr Cross—one of the two first missionaries who came to these stormy and blood-stained isles.

As we stood by that grave in the quiet starlight, with scarcely a sound from the peaceful village to disturb the stillness of night, we could not but think of the strange change that has been wrought in so short a time. It was in 1835 that these two pioneers landed at Lakemba, far away at the eastern extremity of the group.

Two years later, the King of Somo Somo (who like the present ruler was called Tui Thakow) came to Lakemba with his two sons and several hundred followers. When he saw the knives and hatchets, kettles and pots, which the Lakembans had received as barter for food and work, he immediately coveted possession of the goose which laid such golden eggs, so he urged the mission to come at once and settle at Somo Somo, promising every sort of advantage —that all the children should attend school, and that he and his people would give heed to what was taught. The invitation was of course accepted, though not without qualms, the people of Somo Somo being so noted for their excess in every conceivable form of crime, that their name was uttered with dread and even horror throughout the group.

Upwards of a year elapsed ere it was possible to comply with the king's request, as it was necessary to obtain further supplies of men and stores from England. (We do not find this rapid work even now, and it was a far more difficult matter in those days.) When, in the face of many difficulties, Mr Hunt and Mr Lyth arrived with their families at Somo Somo, hoping for the promised welcome, they found that, beyond being allowed the use of a large empty house belonging to the old king, their presence was utterly ignored.

They had scarcely landed when news came that the king's youngest son, Ra Mbithi, had been lost at sea; or rather, that his canoe had drifted to the isle of Ngau, where, as a matter of course,

he was captured and eaten. Great was the lamentation made for him, and utterly vain were the prayers of the new-comers that the women doomed to death, according to custom, might be spared. Sixteen women were forthwith strangled, and their bodies buried close to the door of the great house in which the strangers were lodged. Then in quick succession they were compelled to witness scenes of cruelty and degradation too deep for words. Deeds of darkest abomination were the familiar sights of everyday life, and the people of Somo Somo proved themselves fully entitled to the character they bore throughout the group, of being the vilest of the vile. Cannibal feasts, attended by wildest orgies, were of constant occurrence, the bodies being cooked in ovens close to the house in which Mr Hunt and Mr Lyth had their quarters; and so great was the offence they gave by closing the doors to try and shut out the revolting scenes, that their own lives were endangered, and the king's son, Tuikilakila, came up furiously, club in hand, threatening to kill Mr Lyth, who had ventured on remonstrance.

There was one awful night in particular, when they believed their doom to be decided. There was no thought of defence, for that was quite impossible; but they closed the frail doors, hung up curtains of native cloth to hide them from the eyes that peered in through the slight reed wall on the great gloomy house, and throughout the long hours of that terrible night they knelt in prayer, expecting each moment that the savages would rush in and seal their doom. An awful brooding stillness prevailed, which suddenly was broken by a wild ringing yell; but it was not a death-shout. The people had determined to spare the strangers, and the call was an invitation to all the women to come out and dance, which they accordingly did.

Scenes such as these marked the early years of the mission. So far from granting the promised protection, the chiefs opposed the work in every possible way, forbidding the people to become Christian on pain of death and the oven. The ladies and their children dared not leave the close house in the heart of the town, and their health suffered from the confinement.

After a while Mr Lyth's medical skill brought him into some repute, and the young chief was his first patient,—a man of magnificent stature and physical development. Mr Lyth attended him during a long illness, and had the satisfaction of seeing him recover his health, and also of feeling that he had in a measure won his friendship.

The old king, too, was seriously ill, and claimed medical aid;

but he was not a pleasant patient, as, on the slightest provocation, he would seize his club and threaten to kill his doctor, who on one occasion fled, leaving his coat-tail in the hand of his interesting patient—a loss not easily replaced at Somo Somo! It was at this time (1842) that Mr Cross came to stay here, to profit by Mr Lyth's medical skill; but it was too late. The constant wearing anxieties of his life, first in the Friendly Islands, and afterwards at Lakemba and Viwa—continually striving and struggling with men fiercer and more degraded than any wild beasts—had utterly worn him out; and he arrived here only to enter into his well-earned rest, leaving a widow and five children. So he was laid here; and some little graves beside him tell of the sorrowing mothers whose little ones died in those sad years. Not long after this came the ceremony of the old king's death. For some time he had gradually grown more and more feeble; and though a virulent old heathen, and most inveterate cannibal, his appearance was so venerable and benevolent, that the mission party had become positively attached to him. Latterly they had begun to acquire a little influence over him, and had succeeded in saving some women from being strangled, and some war-captives from being slain for the oven. Several large canoes had also been launched, and suffered to make their first voyage, without the sacrifice of one human victim,—a thing hitherto unprecedented; and though all Christian teaching was strongly opposed, it had not been wholly without result. Twenty-one persons had found courage openly to profess themselves converts, one of these being the king's brother. So there was good reason to hope that the old man would be allowed to die a natural death; and the chief anxiety of Mr Williams, who had succeeded Mr Hunt as missionary here, was to save the lives of the women. Having left the old king apparently pretty well, he was much startled on hearing next morning that he was dead, and that preparations were being made for his funeral. He hurried back to the house, to find the family in the very act of strangling two veiled figures. Each was surrounded by a company of women, all sitting on the ground; and on either side of each group a row of eight or ten strong men were hauling a white cord, which was passed round the neck of the victim. Too late to save these, he passed on to look at the dead chief, and to his astonishment found him still alive, though his chief wife was preparing him for the grave, by covering him with a coat of black powder, tying streamers of white native cloth round his arms and legs, a scarlet handkerchief on his head, arm-

lets, and head ornament of small white cowries, a necklace of large whales' teeth, with long curved points, and an immense train of new native cloth, arranged in loose folds at his feet. This done, a blast of trumpet-shells was blown by the priests, and the chief priest, in the name of the people, hailed Tuikilakila as king, saying, "The sun of one king has set, but our king yet lives." It is the Fijian rendering of "Le roi est mort; vive le roi!"

Seeing that all pleading for the life of the old chief must be without avail, Mr Williams had to content himself with praying that the two women already strangled might suffice; and to this the young chief agreed, adding that, but for his intercession, all the women present should have died. Those who had already been put to death had been duly decorated, their faces covered with vermilion, their bodies oiled, and adorned with garlands of leaves and flowers. They were then wrapped in mats, and carried to the sea-shore, where they were laid on either end of a canoe. For some reason unexplained, the king might not be carried out by a common doorway; so the side of his house was broken down, and he too was carried to the canoe, where his queen sat by him, fanning him to keep off the flies. She had asked, with well-assumed grief, why she too might not be strangled, but was soothed by being assured that there was no one present of sufficiently high rank to act as her executioner.

So the funeral procession started for Weilangi, where the chiefs of Somo Somo are buried; and the grave having been lined with mats, the two women were laid in it, as grass for the king's grave; and then he too was laid therein (having first been stripped of his necklace and shell ornaments). Cloth and mats were heaped over him: and the poor old man was distinctly heard coughing while the earth was being heaped on him.

So died the fierce chief Tui Thakow. A period of ceremonial mourning followed, when men shaved their heads, and women burnt their bodies and cut off their fingers, sixty of which were inserted in hollow reeds, and stuck along the eaves of the king's house, as pleasant and fragrant tokens of sympathy.

Tuikilakila being now the great and all-powerful chief, his determined opposition to the preaching of Christianity made the work of the mission almost hopeless. He publicly repeated his determination to kill and eat any of the people who should venture to interest themselves in the matter. So after toiling for two years more, in the face of this most disheartening opposition, Mr Williams determined to abandon this unfruitful field for a season.

He had, however, to escape, almost by stratagem, as the mission stores and articles of barter were precious in the eyes of the people, who would have kept him prisoner had his intention been known.

So evil continued to run riot unchecked; and Tuikilakila, who had assumed the royal title of Tui Thakow, continued his evil ways till 1854, when he was murdered, while asleep, by his own son. That son was murdered by his brother, to avenge the death of the father, and this brother was himself murdered in his turn. Then civil war broke out; the tribe became divided against itself; every man's hand was against his neighbour; and soon the land was made desolate, and the town of Somo Somo, once the strongest power in Fiji, was left utterly deserted.

Now that peace is established in the land, and that the successor of the old Tui Thakows is responsible to England for the wise government of his people, all might be well were it not for the fatal influence of drink,—that curse which the chiefs have so wisely made it a criminal offence to supply to their people, but which some of themselves, and this noble-looking fellow above all others, find it impossible to resist.[1]

I send you all this long story just to give you a faint idea of the horrible scenes that formerly made up the simple incidents of daily life in this now quiet lovely place; but of course I cannot possibly expect you to realise them, as we do, who are actually on the spot —the more so, as my companions have been eyewitnesses of very similar scenes in different parts of the group, and have heard all details of these events from people who actually took part in them, —many of the worst cannibals of those days being now useful and devoted Christians; some are even teachers and class-leaders.

The loveliness of the night tempting us to stroll further, we came to an old graveyard, and noticed that the fence round it also enclosed a large native house. Here it was that the father of the present Tui Thakow was murdered, and his wife strangled at the funeral. They were buried in the house, which was then abandoned and rendered *tambu* (*i.e.*, sacred or forbidden to touch) to all Fijians.

We sat for long on a grassy hillock, rejoicing in the clear brilliant moonlight and balmy air, and quite regretted the necessity of

[1] The demon drink did its work, and this magnificent chief died not long after the above was written. He is succeeded in his rank and office by Ratu Lala, his son by Andi Eleanor—a fine young fellow, who has been brought up in the special care of Mr Thurston, and has received a sound English education at Sydney. A short account of his installation as Roko of the district will be found at the close of this letter.

sleep. Andi Luciana had most kindly given me her own especial corner, with her large so-called mosquito-curtains of native cloth: I took the precaution of hanging up my own, however. A similar screen had been prepared for Mr and Mrs Langham, and our hostess had retired with her ladies to sleep in a large house close by, called her kitchen. I could not help contrasting our peaceful night, left in possession of this clean new house, with that awful night of dread, when Mrs Lyth and Mrs Hunt, with their little ones, watched through the long hours in the dark, gloomy, old house, waiting for the moment of their massacre. We all slept in peace, and no ill dreams disturbed our rest.

This morning it is raining heavily, to which fact you are indebted for this long letter. A kind white man—I think his name is M'Pherson—has just sent us in a bottle of milk, with some nice fresh bread, a pot of home-made marmalade, and a large basket of lemons, which are most refreshing on board ship. It is a most acceptable present, and we are about to enjoy our breakfast.

Extract from the 'Fiji Times,' Wednesday, August 11, 1880.

"Installation of Ratu Lala.

"The installation of Ratu Lala as Roko Tui Cakaudrove, in place of his father the late Tui Cakau, took place at an early hour on Thursday morning last at Somo Somo.

"His Excellency the Governor landed from H.M.S. Wolverene between seven and eight o'clock, and immediately afterwards proclamation was made by the Mati ni Vanuas of Cakaudrove that the chief was about to be installed; an announcement which was met by the beating of all the *lalis* in the town, and by peculiar cries and shouts by the people assembled from within their houses, inside which, by immemorial usage, they were expected to remain during the ceremony. After these regulation cries, the most death-like silence was observed until the close of the proceedings. The elders of the province then assembled in the large house occupied by the late Tui Cakau, and were all carefully seated according to the rank and precedence of each, an operation requiring some time. When this was accomplished, his Excellency and his staff entered the building and the making of *yaqona* commenced. According to the etiquette on these occasions, this was made in silence, without any song or *méké;* and, when made, various set forms of speech and response were uttered, the names and deeds of the ancestors of the new chief commemorated, and prayers for blessings on the people, the fruits, the animals, &c., of the land, pronounced, these being almost an exact counterpart of those formerly addressed to the heathen gods, but which were now offered to the True God and the Holy Spirit. On the conclusion of these ceremonies, his Excellency declared the bowl of *yaqona* just taken from the *tanoa*, to be that for the drinking of the 'Na Turaga ko na Roko Ratu Tui Cakaudrove,' thereby conferring that designation on Ratu Lala, who drank its contents.

"When he had done so, the Mati ni Vanua again made proclamation, and

the same beating of *lalis* and tumultuous shouting which had preceded the commencement of the proceedings, was repeated, and the injunction on the people to remain within doors removed.

"A dinner was now brought in by the ladies of the place and laid before the new Roko Tui, who, according to precedent, ate a few mouthfuls. The native ceremonial being thus concluded, the more European part of the ceremony began. His Excellency took his seat on a raised platform covered with mats and *masi*, and the young Roko, rising for the first time during the proceedings, and having his long train of black and white *masi*, perhaps thirty yards in length, supported by some of his followers, approached his Excellency, and sitting before him, took the oath of allegiance to the Queen, and one of obedience to the Governor, placing his hands within those of his Excellency as he did so. The Governor then delivered to him the long staff of office, at the same time pronouncing these words, 'Take with this staff, authority to rule as Roko Tui in the province of Cakaudrove. Take heed to the welfare of the people submitted to your care. Be to them a father, not a taskmaster. Lead them, guide them, teach them; and in all your doings remember that strict and solemn account which you must one day render at the judgment-seat of God.'

"The Roko having returned to his seat his Excellency made a few brief remarks to those assembled, and the proceedings terminated."

NANDURI, THE CHIEF TOWN OF MATHUATA,
VANUA LEVU, *August* 7.

We arrived here yesterday. But you will like to hear of our voyage in detail. So to return to Somo Somo. When we went to say good-bye to Andi Luciana, we found her, with all her attendants, busily making native cloth, as were also most of the women in the town. They are preparing for a great meeting of the chiefs, at which all their finery will be required. However, I succeeded in buying several pieces of very delicately painted *tappa*.

This great meeting, at which Sir Arthur is to be present, is a topic of vast interest. Already four houses, each twelve fathoms long, and tied with the best sinnet, have been built for guests, and there is a special house for the *kovana* (governor). Already 150 turtle have been captured, and are kept in the turtle-fences, ready for the great festival: so it is to be a great event. In one house we found women making coarse pottery, but I was not tempted to add it to my collection.

We had a long row to the Jubilee, and then made slow progress. All the morning there was hardly a breath stirring; but at noon the wind rose sharply, and about 3 P.M. it became so gusty, and the weather altogether so threatening, that the captain, not knowing the coast, and wisely avoiding unnecessary risk, decided to anchor for the night off Rambi Island. The water was so deep that we were able to anchor close to the shore, in a lovely bay. The

island belongs exclusively to two planters—Messrs Dawson and Hill,—and the point where we landed was five miles from their house—that of their overseer occupying a prominent position on a high rock above us. He was, however, absent, and we found only two Tanna men in charge of the place.

A tame cat, however, welcomed us with delight, and never left us—trotting beside us in all our rambles. We found pleasant paths leading through fine bush, the foliage very rich, and immense specimens of the bird's-nest fern growing as a parasite on the *pandanus* and other trees; then passing through a field of maize I gathered and ate half-ripe corn-cobs, which were excellent—stolen bread being proverbially so: it is a beautiful crop, growing far above my head. Then we went on to inspect the deserted house, which stands on a great mass of brown rock, in the crevices of which grow huge hart's-tongue and other ferns. It commands a lovely view of the bay on either side, but is the flimsiest of all the breezy houses I have seen in Fiji—merely built of open-work reeds —and as a stiff wind was blowing, we thought we should gain little by sleeping in it, so returned to the shore and took possession of a forsaken boat-house, where we spread our waterproofs, blankets, and pillows. The Fijian teachers who accompanied us prepared beds of dried plantain-leaves for themselves, and kindled a great fire on the beach, which they continually fed with dead palm-leaves to keep up a cheery blaze. There we boiled our kettle for tea, and had a cheery meal in the moonlight, and then explored the white sands till we came to picturesque dark rocks, encircling a tiny bay, with great trees overhanging the water—a gem of a bathing-place. We dare not often venture on sea-bathing, as we never know how close inshore the sharks will venture.

The night proved stormy, and we rejoiced greatly that we were spending it on dry land. The island is about thirty miles in circumference, and is chiefly a great cocoa-nut plantation. The nuts are brought from all parts of the island to the machinery houses on the beach, below Mr Hill's house, where they are broken up, and the kernel dried, either in the sun or by steam in the drying-house, by which process it becomes *coppra;* and being then packed in bags, is ready for export, to be converted into oil by great crushing-machines. The outer husk is then passed into machines known as "devils," by which it is torn up, and the fibre combed out and cleaned, and passed through a screw-press, by which it is compressed into bales, and so prepared for the market, to reappear as mats and brushes, and other familiar objects. I wonder how many people,

as they rub off English mud on such cocoa-mats, ever give a thought to the beautiful isles where that fibre was grown, or to the regiment of wild, almost naked, savages—the "foreign labour" —who, from one circumstance or another, have each left the far-away isle he calls home, to come and work the strange machinery on the white man's plantation!

At daybreak, after a hurried breakfast, we left the lovely island with much regret. A strong wind and a heavy sea gave us a rough, wet, unpleasant day while we crossed Natewa Bay, off Vanua Levu —thirty miles of open sea. Then we once more neared the land, entered the passage of Namooka, and were again in smooth water. Oh the blessedness of being safe inside the reef!—the delight of that sudden change from tossing in miserable discomfort on the great waste of unreasoning waters, to the perfect repose of gliding over the calm untroubled lake that lies within the mighty coral breakwater which the raging breakers may never overpass!

We were now coasting close along the shore of Vanua Levu, which at this point is very bare and unfertile, in striking contrast to the luxuriant isles we had just left. The whole coast, with its fine mountain-ranges, reminded me strongly of Argyleshire, the *noko-noko* (casurina trees) taking the place of birch. But for some stunted palms, and grotesque *pandanus*, we could not have told we were in the tropics; and indeed the cold blue-grey foliage of the latter is nowise suggestive of a land of sunny influences. Further on, the coast is edged with the glossy green of the *tiri* (mangrove), which always tells of a hateful swampy shore, over which the roots of this water-loving tree spread in an inextricable network. Hidden in this swamp, swarming with musquitoes, lies the deserted town of Mota, one of many which have been left desolate, either in consequence of intertribal war, or the ravages of the measles. Just before sunset we came to a lovely uninhabited isle, where we anchored for the night. Determined not to sleep on board the schooner, her cabin being stuffy, and her deck hard, we went ashore to explore. We landed on a beach of fine white sand, shadowed by palms and rich hardwood, and enclosed by high sandstone cliffs of warm colours: and here we had supper, and hunted for sleeping-quarters. We found an overhanging rock, just like the rock-temples of Ceylon, where the sacred images of Buddha are carved; and I really thought we looked rather like a row of Buddhas as we lay beneath this rock-canopy. What with the calm sea, and the mingled light of the red fires and the clear moonlight, glittering on the great waving palm-leaves, and all the brown teachers cooking

their yams, it was a most picturesque scene; and the invariable evening prayer and singing acquires deeper interest when one thinks how recently a canoe, landing in such a place, would come in cautiously, not knowing whether hidden foes might not be lying in wait to club and eat its crew. The morning and evening family prayer is invariable.

It was a lovely night, clear and beautiful. At sunrise we embarked, and sailed with a fair wind, still keeping close inshore. The scenery continued to suggest Argyleshire, range beyond range of mountains, detached masses of rock and islands, pretty colouring, but poor vegetation—a calm and pleasant sail.

About noon we reached this town, Nanduri, which is the capital of this district of Mathuata. It is badly situated, being on a muddy shore, densely overgrown with mangrove, but it is very tidy and rather pretty. The quarters prepared for us were a tiny new house, built of coral-lime, and nicely matted. This, to the Fijian mind, is the very acme of architecture and foreign art. I confess to infinitely preferring the purely native house, with reed or leaf sides, and many doors. Food was immediately brought to us, according to the usual hospitable custom. Several women each carried a tray of plaited fibre, on which lay pieces of green banana-leaf, with yams of different sorts, *taro*, and sweet potatoes. Another had a black pot, in which was a fowl, which had been boiled with *taro* tops, making an excellent soup; others had fresh-water prawns and small fish; and then came the height of culinary triumph, in several kinds of pudding with sweet sauce, all tied up in pieces of young banana-leaf, warmed over the fire to make them oil-proof, and looking like little green bags. Then came the formal customary little speeches of offering and accepting all these good things—of which we partook, and then went off to call upon the chief.

The worthy man deemed it necessary quickly to don a shirt, with the tail worn outside, over his handsome chief-like drapery of *tappa*. He stood facing us for fully two minutes while he struggled with his buttons, ere he was ready to shake hands and welcome us to his town. Then he took us into his house to see his wife, after which ceremony our chief care was, as usual, to find some quiet shady corner where we might enjoy a bathe undisturbed. Our quest, however, proved unsatisfactory, the brook being shallow, and the group of admiring women and children unusually inquisitive. No wonder! Two white women were a sight rarely seen; and one being so tall, the other small, added interest to the spectacle. And when the pale creatures divested

themselves of successive articles of raiment, so needlessly numerous, and then took off their boots, revealing stockings, and when the stockings gave place to feet many shades paler than the sun-browned face and hands, their curiosity on the subject knew no bounds; moreover, we were accompanied by Mrs Langham's god-daughter, a very fair delicate little girl, whose sunny hair was always a source of delight to the people wherever we stopped. And indeed Mrs L. has herself such masses of beautiful long silky hair as might well astonish these women, accustomed from their childhood to have their own crisp locks cut within four inches of the head, round which it stands out like a halo—being always of a tawny sienna colour, from the lime with which it is so constantly washed.

Having completed our toilet, we returned to the village, where there was service in a large church, which was crowded with a most devout congregation. Many strangers from surrounding villages were present,—as were also all interested in the teachers, schools and church matters generally,—to meet the superintendent, and decide certain questions; moreover, the chief was anxious that the annual mission meeting should be celebrated with unusual demonstration. So a very large number of persons had assembled, and many turtle had already been captured for the feast.

I devoted this morning to sketching the curious little jail, a building of strong cocoa-nut posts, deeply sunken in the earth, which is dug out to make the cell, the earth being heaped up outside, almost to the eaves of the wide-thatched roof. It seemed as if the principal and speedy result of imprisonment must be suffocation; but the idea of having a jail at all is as novel as a black coat, and as foreign to Fijian custom. A canoe is just starting for some point whence letters are forwarded to Levuka, so I must close this.

NANDURI, VANUA LEVU, *Friday, August* 11.

MY DEAR JEAN,—I have already sent Nell a long letter from here, now I will begin one to you, to carry on my story, though I can only write occasional fragments, as there are so many interesting things to see and do. It was a pleasant surprise in this remote district to find a countryman—Mr Fraser from Nairn, and his wife. They invited us to dine in their Fijian house, a simple one-roomed cottage, but made pleasant and home-like by a few decorative touches, and by the presence of the young mother and her little ones.

The Langhams being necessarily much absorbed in matters relating to their work, these kind new friends undertook to show me as much as they could of the neighbourhood. So first we climbed up a green valley to a village on the brow of the hill, whence we had a fine view of this "Great Land" as we looked inwards to its mountain-ranges. Here we first found the sago-palm with its clusters of small nuts: and also gathered loads of lilac orchids. On our way back, looking seawards, we saw quite a fleet of picturesque canoes, with great yellow mat-sails, approaching the isle. Loud and discordant blasts on their shell-trumpets announced that they brought a large addition to the turtles required for the feast: five or six have been cooked every day since we arrived, a small item in the feeding of so great a multitude. They are cleaned and then baked in their shells. The chief also gives one thousand yams and three or four pigs daily. The amount of green fat that has been bestowed on us would have rejoiced a true *gourmet;* but his enjoyment would have been alloyed by the fact that the turtle are invariably cooked before presentation, and very badly cooked too, being invariably smoky and insipid.

We reached the shore just as the canoes were unloading, and in a few moments fifteen large turtle lay on their backs on the grassy bank, flapping and gaping piteously. These were an offering to the chief from the new-comers. They have mustered in great force. Fully three thousand people have assembled on this wild coast. They have come from long distances, and from every direction, to attend this meeting of such teachers as there are, and to beg that a larger number may be provided. They say that sixty towns are now without teachers. But the difficulty is to provide the men fitted for the work, most of the candidates being simply young students, not ripe for such responsible posts.

About twelve miles from Nanduri there is a small but very picturesque rocky island, called Kia,—a bold mass jutting up from the sea. I longed to see it nearer, and the Frasers most kindly agreed to accompany me. The chief lent us his fine large canoe and capital crew, which included several of his own kinsfolk—stalwart, chief-like men.

We started soon after sunrise, and a fresh breeze carried us over in a couple of hours. The island is a perfect triumph of careful cultivation. By nature it was only a huge mass of bare rock; but so diligently have its inhabitants filled up every crevice with soil brought from the mainland, that they have succeeded in growing so many palms and bananas, that now, when seen from the sea,

this once barren rock appears positively fertile. We landed at a village where the chief was superintending the finishing of a huge mat canoe sail, which was spread upon the ground in the cool shadow of a group of old trees. Of course we had to go through the form of being received in the house; but on expressing a wish to breakfast beside the sea, we were invited to sit on the mat-sail, and allowed to be happy in our own way.

I only wish it were possible to convey to you all the impressions of delight of such a day as this—all the thousand details of beauty, which give such light and gladness to the life I find so fascinating, though it sounds so dry and dead when I try to put it into words. Just try if you can, ever so faintly, realise the picture. A calm glittering blue sea, white coral sands sparkling in the sunlight, ourselves in deep cool shade of dense glossy foliage, whence bunches of rosy silky tassels float down with every breath of air, as playthings for tiny brown children in lightest raiment. And then the multitude of wandering shells, each tenanted by a shy hermit crab, assembling cautiously round us to gather up stray crumbs. Close by are the graves of successive generations of these hardy fishers, who have lived and died on this tiny isle, without an aspiration beyond it. Now the graves are overgrown with tangles of the marine convolvulus with lilac blossom, while the starry white convolvulus hangs in light drapery from the rocks beyond. And beyond the sea rise the blue mountain-ranges of Vanua Levu, in ever-changing light and shadow.

Mrs Fraser had brought her two little ones with her; so she decided to spend the day at this quiet spot, while her husband accompanied me on a walk round the island. Her perfect knowledge of the language makes her thoroughly at home with all these kindly people. So we started on our walk, which we found practicable, except at one point, where, the cliffs being precipitous, and the tide having risen, I had to accept the offer of a strong native to carry me round a headland to the next bay. He took me up in his arms like a big baby, and though forced to confess that I was *bimbi sara* —*i.e.*, very heavy—he carried me ever so far round in the sea!

We visited each of the four quaint little villages, and entered innumerable houses, searching for baskets of a particular kind only made here. In this quest we were tolerably successful, and stayed some time to watch the women weaving them with dexterous fingers: they are of very fine fibre and most intricate pattern. Of course we were objects of mutual interest, and the astonishment of the people at our sudden appearance knew no bounds. I doubt

whether any of these people had ever seen a white woman before—Mrs Fraser's presence, even at Nanduri, being purely accidental (her husband having just been appointed to superintend the formation of the new district gardens, by the produce of which every district is henceforth to pay its taxes).

We succeeded in buying some interesting specimens of old manufactures, carved bowls, and stone axes, then turned aside to visit some most poetic burial-grounds. One of them haunts me still, it was so peaceful—a lonely grassy headland, with half-a-dozen graves, strewn with red or white coral, and shadowed by one palm. It was sheltered by great red cliffs, and beyond it lay the calm wide ocean bathed in glittering light. I would fain have lingered to sketch the scene, but we had to hurry on as fast as we could possibly walk. Such a scramble! As it was, we found on our return that the wind had changed, and we could not return to the mainland that night. At first we insisted on starting, and actually embarked, but we saw that the crew were really afraid of danger, so of course we yielded and came ashore again, when the kind islanders brought us a capital supper. The people are all fishers, and a canoe-load of rainbow-coloured fish—some pure scarlet, some vivid green, some silvery—had just been brought in, as also many crabs.

Most mothers would have been somewhat perturbed at such a *contretemps;* but Mrs Fraser took it quite calmly, and the people provided us with fine mats, and as a matter of course conducted us to the *vale ni lotu* (the house of religion), where we slept undisturbed—my big sun-hat acting as my pillow. But after a while I awoke, and crept out into the clear moonlight, and sat alone on the silent shore, drinking in the delicious night breeze.

Towards morning it blew pretty hard, but at sunrise Mr Fraser got a small canoe to enable me to reach a cliff which I wished to sketch; but the canoe was so tiny, and the sea so rough, that it was on the verge of swamping. We therefore landed, and walked as far as was possible. Then I got in alone, and the boatman, a 'cute, sturdy little fellow, half paddled, half swam, while I rapidly made my drawing.

We walked back, found breakfast ready, and once more embarked. The fine canoe flew before the wind, cutting through the water beautifully, of course shipping seas and involving much bailing out—a process which is sometimes done with a wooden scoop, but more frequently by throwing out the water with the sole of the foot, using it like a hand. It needed half-a-dozen tacks

to bring us to land; and each of these, in a canoe of this size, involves serious labour, as the base of the heavy triangular sail must be lifted by main force, and carried to the opposite end of the canoe by the combined strength of several men.

On the way a bit of the great mat-sail came unsewn, and the men in charge (themselves high caste) were in such terror of arriving with anything wrong that we ran in behind the mangroves to sew it up ere they would venture to go on, as they dared not face the chief with anything out of order. This, his own canoe, is the only one which dares approach Nanduri with sail up and flag flying, and as he was not on board, even we dipped the flag as we drew near, the flag being a streamer of *masi*. All other canoes must lower their sail while at a considerable distance, and row to shore, as a mark of deep respect.

We called on the chief to thank him for the loan of his canoe, and found his people dispensing food to their guests on rather an extensive scale of entertainment. The business part of the meeting was nearly over, and the people were all arriving for the *solevu*, or great feast of the morrow. In the evening there was singing, and some dancing by torchlight, but no Fijian cares to dance much till the moon rises, and that was not due before midnight.

Next morning many more canoes arrived—such a pretty bustling scene; and as it would be rash to put on festal array before landing, all the best cloth and garlands came in baskets, and the whole shore was one great dressing-room, where the mysteries of the toilet were carried on in the sight of the sun. The weather was greatly in our favour, for though heavy clouds hung threateningly over us they merely shielded us from the sun, and no rain fell.

Soon after breakfast we all went to the *rara* (*i.e.*, village green), where we were invited to sit beside the Roko (the chief, Tui Ndreketi).

The principal business of the day was an exchange of presents. First of all the teachers and their special followers gave gifts of cloth and whales' teeth to the great chief. So the six native ministers and about sixty teachers advanced, dressed up in many extra yards of native cloth, beautifully designed, and trailing on the ground in trains many yards long. Then followed people from other towns, also dressed up. They danced pretty dances, and all shook off their fine drapery at the feet of the chief—an example followed by the grave teachers, who made a pretty speech, formally presenting the *tappa* to the Roko, and then retreated

A CHIEF'S KITCHEN.

p. 208

much shorn. The cloth made two great heaps, which the chief divided next morning among his followers. This giving took the whole morning.

After lunch came what I may call the offertory, as every one brought according to his ability for the furtherance and support of Christian work. We now found our places set on the other side of the village green, lest it might seem as if the offerings now to be made were to the chief instead of the mission. First 1000 women advanced single file, each bringing a mat, or a bunch of live crabs, or dried fish, or a basket of yams—one brought a ludicrous roast parrot; then as many men came up, bringing six or eight large turtle, seven or eight live pigs, fowls, yams, palm-cloth, &c. One tiny child brought a large cock in his arms. He was such a jolly little chap—well oiled, with scarlet *sulu* (kilt) of turkey-red, and white native cloth, and quaint, partially shaven head—they shave in such odd patterns, leaving little tufts and curls. Then followed all the usual very graceful dances, which I have so often described, and some new ones, in which every dancer carried a dried fish, let into a piece of a split cocoa-palm leaf, and waved it fan-like, just to mark them as fishers. Everywhere we note the same wonderful flexibility and marvellous time kept in most intricate ballet-figures. But coarse sticks take the place of the old carved clubs, and some ungraceful traces of British trade appear. Here one man was dressed in a large union-jack pocket-handkerchief! and a woman wore the foot and stalk of a broken wine-glass as an earring! The people appear to be very poor, and less tasteful in making their necklace-garlands and kilts. At sunset there was a pause, and then Mr Langham gave the multitude what seemed to be a most impressive little address, and a few minutes later the whole 3000 were kneeling prostrate on the grass. It was a very striking scene, remembering that these people are only just emerging from heathenism; but they are so very cordial to the mission, and so anxious to be taught, it seems hard that there should be such difficulty in getting native teachers trained, and this is greatly owing to the lack of white missionaries.

To-night there is a dance by torchlight, which will become fast and furious when the moon rises. Already the people are having a right merry time. I have just been out with Mrs Langham for a little turn; but her husband was unable to come with us, and we did not like to mix much in so large a crowd, or indeed to be seen there, not knowing whether the dances might be such as we should seem to sanction. But it is wonderful, when you come to

think of it, that two ladies and a little child should be able to go about at all, on such a night, among 3000 wild people, as yet so utterly untaught. But those who did notice us were all most courteous, and I am glad to have had even a glimpse of this wild weird scene, which, with its accompaniment of shouts, yells, and measured hand-clapping, is the most savage thing I have yet witnessed. Now we are back in our own coral-lime house. Mr Langham has just married a couple, and is now busy with his teachers. We leave this place to-morrow morning. It is a most hospitable district, and sufficiently uncivilised even for me! This morning a horrible old ex-cannibal crept close to Mr Langham, and then, as if he could not refrain, he put out his hand and stroked him down the thigh, licking his lips, and exclaiming with delight, "Oh, but you are nice and fat!"

ON BOARD THE JUBILEE, OFF NEIVAKA POINT,
August 13.

We are lying at anchor here, and the others have gone ashore to hold service. I would fain go and bathe in the lovely little stream, but as such a proceeding would divide the attractions, and might diminish the congregation, I had better have a chat with you instead. We left Nanduri yesterday morning, after an incredible amount of hand-shaking, and "love-giving," as the Christian Fijians say—*Sa loloma* being their kindly greeting to us. They also have a graceful form of farewell, exactly answering to the "A demain," "Au revoir," "A rivederla," or "Auf Wiedersehen," of nations nearer home. When we say, *Sa lakki mothe*, which means "go to sleep," they reply, *Roa roa*, "to-morrow morning," meaning we shall meet again soon. Very pretty is their word for the twilight, *luma luma*, which just answers to our *gloaming*.

I told you about our last evening at Nanduri.

In the early morning all the mats, cloth, &c., presented to the mission were brought in and divided. I, as a visitor, was presented with a live turtle, a whale's tooth, and four mats, also a basket and some fans from the chief's wife. And when the pile of native cloth presented to the chief had been divided among his followers, I was able to buy some very beautiful specimens.

Having formally taken leave of the Roko and his family, we embarked, leaving Mathuata with very pleasant impressions of the hearty genial kindness of its people. The day was lovely, and we were able to sail all the way inside the reef, so there was the double advantage of being in smooth water and seeing the coast

to perfection. For the tropics, it is very barren, *pandanus* and *noko-noko* being the principal foliage. At this season the people in all parts of the isles have an annual burning of the tall reeds to clear the land for their plantations. The smoky haze gives a rich lurid colour to the atmosphere, and deepens the blue of the near mountains, while it blends the distant ranges in soft dreamy lights.

We arrived here at sunset last night. Neivaka Point is a grand rocky headland, with a very pretty village, on a palm-fringed shore, with a clear stream, which here flows into the sea. We went ashore for an hour or so, but as we have to push on early this morning, it was decided that we must sleep on board. So we all lay on deck in the bright starlight, and towards morning there was clear moonlight, and then a lovely sunrise. I see the boat coming off from the shore, so we shall soon be under way.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHIEF OF MBUA—FEUDAL RIGHTS—A NIGHT IN A MISERABLE VILLAGE—CHURCH *A LA* ST COLUMBA—NIGHT ON A DESERT ISLE—SAVU SAVU—BOILING SPRINGS—THEIR USE—PAST AND FUTURE.

NI SONI SONI, VANUA LEVU,
August 16.

We are resting in great peace in a large clean church, built of coral-lime. It stands apart from the village, on a grassy spit of land, divided from the sea-beach only by a border of Fijian lilies—overhead are tall cocoa-palms. It is a calm pleasant spot, and we hope for a night of peace and rest, of which we stand sorely in need.

We hoped to have reached Mbua about noon on the 13th, but we had seventeen miles to make in a head-wind, so it was near sunset ere we anchored in the bay, after which we had to row three miles up the river, which, like the Rewa, has several mouths, and we tried the wrong one first, and rowed a considerable distance up a fine stream, dense with *tiri* (mangrove) on either side. Then, retracing our ground, we made a fresh start for the town; but by this time it was so dark that we could only discern dark palms against the sky, and had to shout to people on the shore to learn our way.

On reaching the mission station we found the inmates absent, but the students lighted up the house, and prepared tea and milk; and soon a kind neighbour (Miss Wilkinson) brought us a welcome gift of fresh butter and bread. I regret to say her father is suffering seriously from internal cramp, brought on by long exposure in the canoe coming to Nasova with the news of the wreck of the Fitzroy.

A wild storm beat up in the night, and we were thankful to be on land. The country round is bleak and barren; but heavy rain-clouds and mists glorified the very shapeless ranges of hills, and suggested parts of Scotland.

In the morning we called on the chief, Tui Mbua, a middle-aged man, with a pleasant-looking wife. Not long ago his favourite son committed suicide, in his rage at finding his father's laws enforced against some of his peccadilloes, as if he had been a *kai-see* (*i.e.*, of low birth). Such very great laxity is allowed to chiefs by the feudal system (which always has prevailed in these isles, and is likely in a great measure to be continued), that it really must be difficult for a man always to stop at the exact point where a chief's right becomes wrong.

There is a system in force called *lala*, by which a chief may claim from his people whatever service or property is required for any public work affecting the good and honour of the tribe. This is considered right and proper, and his commands are willingly obeyed. But the system is liable to great abuse, being constantly called into action merely to gratify some whim or personal pleasure of a chief—as, for instance, when he covets some expensive article, and his people have to raise the payment. This abuse is called *vaka saurara*—*i.e.*, "taking by force," and is simply an oppressive form of levying black-mail. A common instance of the way in which this is done is when a chief (or more probably his son) starts on a journey with a party of his retainers, perhaps several canoe-loads of people (in former days they would all have been armed men). Perhaps they are going to some great feast (a *solevu* or exchange of property), to which they must carry some offerings, expecting to receive a good exchange, each district bringing its own produce. They probably start literally empty-handed; but at every village where they halt, they demand not only food but gifts, and a Fijian thinks it shameful to refuse to give anything for which he is asked. So these rolling stones disprove the old proverb, for they gather as they go, and reach the *solevu* well provided—their progress along the coast being marked by every manner of evil; for

they regard neither rights of property nor domestic ties, but are simply a curse to the quiet hard-working villagers. They have only to see and covet any man's goods, and straightway appropriate them.

I believe the system, in its true and legitimate working, is considered both wise and good. It is apparently the only way to get a semi-civilised race to work well together for the good of the tribe; and it is a custom which, from time immemorial, has existed throughout the group, being the tribute rendered by the people at the bidding of their chief, to be repaid by protection and by a fair share of all goods acquired by the tribe. It applies to planting gardens, making roads, building houses and canoes, fishing for turtle, or any other work requiring combined action. People even from other districts may be summoned, and in return for their work receive daily food, and presents of cloth and whales' teeth on their departure. Thus work is done quickly and well which would otherwise be impossible.

Suppose a great canoe has to be built. All the best carpenters in the tribe are *lava'd*, and the fittings of the canoe are *lavaka'd* from every village in the chief's district. Each is required to furnish so many fathoms of narrow matting to make the great mat-sails. This is provided by the women of the village. Ropes, sails, tackling, and all the different fittings, are also thus provided. So is the food for the carpenters. Then when the new canoe is finished, the people must prepare a great feast at every place where it calls. When one great chief visits another, food is *lavaka'd* for the entertainment of the strangers; and I am told that this occasions frightful waste, as each chief tries to outdo what others have done, that he may appear liberal before his guests. So these visits sometimes leave whole districts in a state of famine.

We heard sore complaints in this district of the chief's exactions of compulsory "presents" from the very poor villages hereabouts. A short time ago he ordered all the people from far and near to assemble and bring him 40,000 yams, 700 mats, and every man a whale's tooth, each of which represents upwards of a shilling in value, but *means* far more. It symbolises goodwill; and the giving of a whale's tooth accompanies every action of the smallest importance—from asking for forgiveness, or claiming the clubbing of a foe, or bringing in his body. Well, of course, many of these poor men had not got a whale's tooth, so they had to go and beg for them from their friends. One canoe which started on this quest was upset, and six men drowned. Two of them left tiny

babies, who were brought to be christened at the most wretched of all the villages we have seen—one from which you could not conceive it possible to wish to extort the value of a pin. But it struck me that this great chief was far more inclined to receive than to give. After witnessing the generosity of the Mathuata chief, I was much amused when this man, with considerable formality, presented ten cocoa-nuts for the use of the teachers and crew of the Jubilee, being, I understand, his sole offering to the mission for the year. Evidently we have left the unsophisticated regions, and returned to those where white influence prevails!

Returning on board, we found the wind was dead against us, and after vainly beating in great misery for several hours, we had to anchor for the night within sight of the Wilkinson's house, and sorely regretted not having taken their advice to stay where we were. We had a hateful evening and night; and as the cabin was unendurable, there was nothing for it but to lie on deck in the rain and get soaked, which we did most thoroughly.

We tried a fresh start in the morning, but there was still a head-wind and rain; and everything was so saturated and miserable, that it was resolved to anchor off the first village we came to. This proved to be Namau, a filthy village in the mangrove-swamp, poorer and more miserable than any place where we have yet been. The people looked diseased from sheer poverty, and we scarcely liked to enter their houses, but we were driven to desperation by the longing to try and dry our clothes; and their kindness and hospitality knew no bounds. They seemed delighted to welcome us to their poor homes, and heaped up blazing fires to dry us and all our goods. The fire-places (as I have told you, when speaking of other isles) are placed wherever fancy prompts—just a sunken oblong, anywhere on the floor, with a few rounded stones, on which rest the large earthenware cooking-pots. Very picturesque!

We divided ourselves among the different houses, and our goods were scattered all over the village; but everything, to the smallest trifle, was brought safely back, and a few small gifts were received with wonder and delight. The (very meagre) contents of my travelling-bag were gazed at with much interest, especially some photographs of sacred subjects in one of my books. They all called one another to look at and discuss these; one of the Crucifixion, Mary at the foot of the Cross, chiefly riveting their attention. I often wonder, considering how many of our own impressions of sacred things are due to pictures seen in early life, that their use is so entirely neglected in all these schools. It may be

because the supply is not forthcoming. Certainly these highly imaginative people have always shown themselves wonderfully capable of realising things unseen; and even in their days of most gross idolatry, their religion was entirely an appeal to the imagination—wild legends of the gods, told in song, but very rarely reduced to the visible form of any idol. The only pictures I have seen in any native houses are portraits of (I think) Holloway, whose advertisements are duly sent to all native ministers in the group. The literature is of course thrown away on them, but the portraits, sometimes several in a row, ornament some prominent pillar.

As soon as we were moderately dry, we settled ourselves for the night in the wretched little church, which is a miserable spot, with mangrove-swamp all round it. It is the tiniest little building of wicker-work—quite a St Columba style of architecture,[1] wattle without the daub; and the rainy wind blew through it, and the mosquitoes took refuge in it. We had a weary night. Being very tired, we all hoped for a good night's rest, but had hardly fallen asleep when a cheerful brother missionary, in aggravating health and spirits, chanced to anchor at a neighbouring village, and in his delight at hearing his friends were so near, he came over and woke us all, and kept the gentlemen talking the whole night. Pleasant for Mrs L. and myself, who were vainly striving to sleep! At early dawn the two little orphan babies I told you about were brought to be christened, so we had to hurry over our dressing, and for once

[1] In truth, such scenes as these often carried me back in fancy to our own Northern Isles as they must have appeared 1300 years ago, when St Columba came over from Ireland to Scotland in his open canoe, covered with hides, to preach Christianity to the wild heathen tribes of Caledonia; the "painted men" (whether tattooed or merely dyed, matters little), whom he found living in huts, probably more miserable than these, and clothed, not as here in paper-cloth, but in the skins of wolves and wild deer, and possibly wearing, as their most treasured ornament, a wild boar's tusk, much as these people do. We know that the celebrated monastery on Iona was merely a collection of huts clustered round just such a humble wattled church as the one here described; and having seen these, I can readily accept the tradition which ascribes to St Columba the foundation of three hundred churches, half in Scotland, and the rest in Ireland. For wherever he or his disciples travelled, they established new monasteries on the model of Iona, and these in their turn sent forth teachers, who preached everywhere; and each tribe or clan that accepted the new faith, built for itself a church of wattle-work; and the building was kept up, and the priest was supported by voluntary contributions of the clansmen, paid either in kind or in labour, just as the teachers of a Fijian village are paid today. And as in the olden days a very few advanced villages would make a mighty effort to build a stone church, such as the famous *Candida Casa* of St Ninian in Galloway, or the "White Kirk of Buchan," so here, with far less reason or comfort, a zealous tribe will (happily in but few instances) exert itself to the utmost to distinguish itself by building a "White Church" of coral-lime—a landmark to be discerned from afar.

were right glad to return on board ship. How any human beings can deliberately build their villages in these mangrove-swamps passes my comprehension. It simply means living in the mud, with salt or brackish water on every side, and mosquitoes in myriads.

Our quarters to-night seem strangely luxurious, and I must profit by them and sleep now,—so good night.

August 17.

After all, I did not sleep long, for I woke to see such lovely moonlight that I crept out of my corner made of mats and my old green plaid, and went out to sit alone by the brink of the great waters, and watched the earliest lights before dawn. Now all are astir, and we are just starting.

CAPTAIN BARRACK'S HOUSE, SAVU SAVU,
VANUA LEVU, *August* 22, 1876.

I have been here for some days greatly enjoying the blessings of the land, and this most lovely scenery. We left Ni Soni Soni at dawn on the 17th, purposing to make the isle of Taviuni, but finding the wind fair for Levuka, steered for that port. Another change of wind put a stop to that, and we could make but little way. After a weary day of beating, we succeeded in nearing the small uninhabited isle of Namena. Tempted by the lovely foliage which overhung the white sands and drooped right over the water, we landed in search of some shelter which might act as sleeping-quarters. After a long hunt, during which I cut my boots to pieces on the rocky coral shore, we found a slightly projecting rock—a poor shelter, but better than the hard deck. So we brought our mats and pillows ashore and made nests for ourselves by the light of the blazing fires at which the students did their cooking. Of course they were as much delighted as ourselves to escape the night on board, and their presence lent human interest to the scene, as they gathered in picturesque groups round the fires, or knelt together in evening prayer. The night proved tolerably fine, only a few heavy showers, which shot off the rock just past our toes, so we were quite dry. And you know in these favoured isles we have no fear of snakes or other noxious creatures; so we slept in peace, knowing that nothing more hurtful than a wandering crab could possibly assail us, and that he would run off in great fear the moment he discovered what strange beings had invaded his isle.

Once more we embarked at dawn, and the wind blew us straight

to this port, which I exceedingly longed to see, but our destination was Taviuni; so, much to my disgust, we tacked with the intention of crossing thither. For several hours we battled with the breeze—weary hours of tossing and sickness. We lost our maintopmast; and at last, finding that the wind had driven us back to this desired haven, it was resolved that the Langhams and myself should come ashore, and the vessel go on to Taviuni with such of the party as were thither bound, and return for us. So an hour later I found myself under this hospitable roof; but the Langhams make it a rule always to live in native towns, in order to be amongst the people. How I do revel in a fresh clean room all to myself, and abundance of new milk and scones!

This place has a special interest on account of its boiling springs, —not that they are striking in themselves, but because there are so few places in the group where any trace of such phenomena is found. I have seen no other boiling springs except those at Ngau, but I hear there are some at Loma Loma, and there is a hot stream in Viti Levu called Wai Mbasanga. Here, too, occasional shocks of earthquake suggest that volcanic action is only dormant and may reawaken some day. The springs are quite boiling, but (as was the case of those we saw on the isle of Ngau) a stream of cold water flows close to them, and the people save themselves the trouble of getting firewood by boiling all their food in the springs. They take their crabs, bunches of bananas, yams or *taro*, wrap them up in banana-leaves and deposit them in the boiling spring; then they go and bathe some way off where the hot and cold streams have mixed, and return to find their dinner ready cooked. The water tastes utterly disgusting and very salt, but the food boiled in it is excellent; and the people who bathe here are free from many diseases. There are springs all along the shore for half a mile, just at high-water mark. The three principal ones bubble up in a circle like a small crater. They are intermittent, and the highest makes a fountain about two or three feet high. There used to be about fifteen springs in this circle, and the people came from far and near to cook their food, especially if they had any *bodies* to boil. But in 1863 Tui Wainoonoo, a neighbouring chief, came and besieged the large strongly fortified town of Eroi further up the lake. He could not take it, and raised the siege just when the defenders were reduced to starvation, having only a few lemons for food. He, however, captured sixteen men, and Ramasi-Alewa, the old lady to whom the springs belonged. She was past seventy, and must have been very tough and smoke-dried; but as in her

young days she had been a regular Joan of Arc, leading her tribe to battle, and herself fighting hand to hand with a hatchet, he determined to eat her. So he had her cooked with the sixteen men, and made a great feast; and then, to spite the people, before leaving the district, he attempted to choke up all the springs—in which amiable effort he partially succeeded.

These springs were also a favourite place for depositing all superfluous babies, especially girls, who never got much of a welcome. They were popped in alive like so many lobsters, and treated with quite as little ceremony. I am told that there is an intermittent cold spring on a conical hill on the opposite side of the harbour. Some of the hot springs bubble up through the salt water below high-water mark.[1]

I think Savu Savu is about the prettiest place I have yet seen. The harbour is so entirely enclosed by great hills that it is simply a salt lake, dotted with many isles, all richly wooded—too richly, for they are in consequence haunted by a plague of mosquitoes. Dr Mayo, who, you will remember, was one of our party coming out, has such a conviction that the hot springs will become important in course of time, that he has bought one of these pretty islands and built himself a house on it. It is not yet finished, and he is obliged to live at Khandavu as quarantine medical officer, much to his disgust, as his object in coming to Fiji was the hope of gaining large experience of native races. He brought out as his assistant a college servant, who lives by himself on the island and takes great charge of everything. I have just been across to see the unfinished house and tastefully planned shrubberies of foreign plants; but the island is infested by hordes of such vicious mosquitoes that I was fairly driven away.

Of course we have made expeditions to all parts of the lovely lake,

[1] At the request of Professor Liversidge, of the Sydney University, I asked Dr Bromlow, of H.M.S. Sapphire, to take water from these springs for analysis. The following table gives the proportion of salts in a million parts of water, or milligrammes per litre :—

Silica, insoluble,	131.33
,, soluble,	5.78
Alumina and traces of iron,	74.92
Chlorine,	4506.06
Calcium,	1428.84
Magnesium,	3.04
Potassium,	72.03
Sodium,	1298.28
Sulphuric acid,	219.29
Undetermined or loss,	73.34

From the foregoing it will be seen that the greater part of the salts in solution consists of the chlorides of calcium and sodium.

beginning with the native town of Eroi, to see the fortified hill which was so bravely defended. It is surrounded by very deep ditches, and only accessible by a very narrow path overgrown with dense vines. The thatched roofs of the village are half hidden by tall bananas and scarlet hybiscus, orange and lemon trees: the latter are of the prickly sort, which was planted near many fortifications as a natural defence. Another day we sailed across the bay to visit friends who there own a large plantation. Here we saw something of sugar-growing, sugar-crushing, and rum-distilling; also fields of splendid pine-apples—by far the finest we have seen in the isles. Turtles and pine-apples in abundance sound well, do they not? But I fear they do not compensate for lack of beef and mutton, and many another ordinary comfort.

I find that Captain Barrack is just sending a little schooner across to Levuka, so I shall despatch this long journal to catch the mail. I only wish it might give any of you a thousandth part of the amusement which I have derived from the actual trip, notwithstanding all the discomforts.—Your loving sister.

CHAPTER XX.

NASOVA—THE MOUNTAIN WAR—A YEAR'S PROGRESS—FIJIAN HOMAGE.

NASOVA, *August* 24, 1876.

DEAREST EISA,—Here I am once more safely back from a long cruise in the wilds, of which I have sent a full account to Jean. Our last halt was at Savu Savu—a lovely bay, which I left with great regret, resisting several cordial invitations to visit kind neighbours there. We started yesterday morning at dawn, but found the sails needed some repairs; so we waited five hours at the mouth of the harbour, and whiled away the time by inspecting the old buildings and machinery of a deserted plantation—the heavy cocoa-nut crushers and other expensive plant, now standing idle and useless—always a pitiful sight.

We embarked in the afternoon and had a head-wind, which has been our evil fortune for every bit of open sea we have had on this cruise. Verily I am sick of sailing vessels! We had a wretched

night—tossing about and lying on the very hard deck not venturing to unfasten pillows or plaids, from momentary expectation of shipping seas and downpours of rain. I confess it made me wish many times that I had stayed at the head of exquisite Savu Savu bay, which, they say, scarcely shows a ripple even when a hurricane sweeps the land. At daybreak this morning we were off the isle of Koro, and arrived here about breakfast-time to find that Lady Gordon and the children are at Suva, and that Arthur Gordon has returned from the mountain-war very seriously ill—from gastric, or maybe typhoid, fever. The war itself has just been brought to a very satisfactory conclusion, marking one bright point in Fijian history — the first since annexation; and it has all been settled quietly, without any sort of fuss.

The Governor, Captain Knollys, Mr Maudslay, and Baron von Hügel, arrived last night. On their return from the mountains they had gone to Suva to see Lady Gordon, but were summoned here when Mr Gordon's illness was found to be so serious. Happily, Mrs Abbey and her husband are both excellent nurses, and Abelak and the other Hindoo valet are most neat and patient attendants. Of course Dr Macgregor is here, and himself had the difficult task of conveying his patient all the way from the mountains, where the fever first developed itself, owing, we suppose, to exposure and want of proper food.

Wednesday, Sept. 13.

Everything continues much as when I last wrote to you. Lady Gordon and the children are still at Suva, staying with Mrs Joski. Of course they must not return here just yet, though Mr Gordon is decidedly on the mend, and to day was able to walk into the drawing-room with slight help from Abbey; but he was very soon utterly tired out. Baron von Hügel is busy making an illustrated catalogue of his huge collection of Fijian *curios*, and I have been helping him a little, and also working up the sketches I got on my last cruise while they are still fresh in my mind. Our time on land was so cruelly short in proportion to that which we spent in misery on the sea, that I generally had to content myself with making very elaborate pencil-drawings with notes of colour, and these I am now working out.

A terribly sad thing has just happened here, and cast quite a gloom over the town. Do you remember my telling you, just after our arrival here, of the marriage of a very popular girl to a young planter? A few days ago she became a happy mother, and all

seemed well; but things went wrong, and she died yesterday. Her husband, supposing all danger to be over, had gone on business to another isle, and returned by the steamer this morning. All the flags in harbour and in the town were hung half mast during the funeral; and when the captain hailed the nearest vessel to ask who was dead, the poor fellow heard his wife's name shouted back in answer.

I have just been to see Mrs Macgregor in her new house. She is the only one of all our sisterhood of last year still remaining in Fiji. Her new house is, unfortunately, a good deal further from Nasova than the one she has hitherto had; but it is convenient for the Doctor, being close to the pretty little hospital, which is generally very full. I am sure you will be amused to hear that the Doctor has enlisted my services in quite a new branch of art. He is busy studying some curious skin diseases peculiar to certain of the imported labour, which gives the patient the appearance of being clad in moiré-antique, with a white watered pattern on a dark ground. Of these patterns he has made various rough drawings, which he has now set me to elaborate.

September 16.

Colonel Pratt has just been here to call, looking very ill. He has had a long spell of work at Suva with his Engineers, getting the land surveyed and the new road begun, which involves being out a great deal in a blazing sun, and is exceedingly trying.

Sir Arthur rejoined Lady Gordon at Suva in the beginning of the month, Captain Knollys escorting him. The latter returned here two days ago, in a deluge of rain, having been four days coming from Suva, beating against a head-wind. Of course his boat was only provisioned fully for one day, so he and his men had very short commons for the last three days.

Mr Gordon continues to improve very slowly, but we hope surely. The Doctor says that so soon as he can be moved, he must go to New Zealand for change of air. Our parson, Mr Floyd, is also going there next week.

September 22.

Last Monday Captain Knollys started for Suva, in the Governor's beautiful new barge, which is a very handsome yet simple sixteen-oar boat, built for him in Sydney. It was built on the principle of the landlord who charged one of the Georges a guinea for a fresh egg,—not because eggs were scarce, but because kings are so. In

this instance Fijian governors are scarce; and so, having ordered a boat worth about £300, Sir Arthur is justly indignant at receiving one charged £750, and apparently he can get no redress. Rather too hard, considering how scarce money is in this colony.

The barge returned last night, bringing Sir Arthur and Lady Gordon and the children, who look all the better for their change of air. This house is really beginning to look quite cosy and home-like, and we all quite enjoy coming back to it from our various wanderings. Nevertheless I am already preparing for another start, as Captain Knollys offers me the loan of his nice new boat (his yacht, we call it); and it seems a good opportunity of paying my long-talked-of visit to Mrs Leefe at Nananu. So, if all is well, my next letter will be from her house.

War Letter.

Nasova, *September* 12, 1876.

Dear George,—You ask for some details of the war with the mountain tribes. I wish you were here to hear about it yourself from Captain Knollys and Dr Macgregor, who have been giving me most thrilling accounts of some of their adventures.

Mr Gordon got through his work sooner than the others, and returned here on the 3d of July, apparently in perfect health, and in very high spirits. He then returned to the seat of war, and joined Captain Knollys in the mountains, where they had some very rough and exhausting work in routing the enemy out of caves where they had taken refuge. This was satisfactorily done, and then, what with bad and insufficient food, and exposure, Mr Gordon utterly broke down: he had to be carried all the way to the coast,—four days' very difficult march up and down steep mountain-paths, crossing and recrossing rivers and streams, and enduring great hardships. On the second day they were compelled to march thirty-six miles, and had to cross streams thirty-one times, &c., the Singatoko river eighteen times, and another stream thirteen times,—very exhausting and difficult work. At last a small steamer arrived to bring back the troops; and so he was brought here, and has ever since been very dangerously ill with low typhoid fever. However, he is now beginning to mend, and we hope ere long to see him as well as ever.

Well now, to tell you as far as I can in detail. You know that soon after annexation, when the mountain tribes were only half

inclined to accept English rule, and still less friendly to the *lotu* (Christianity), the isles were swept by the terrible scourge of measles, which they assumed to be a judgment from their insulted gods. They therefore "threw off the cloth," which is a formula for expressing that, by returning to total nakedness, they utterly defy the *matanitu* or Government, and the *lotu:* they also allowed their hair to grow to the fullest-sized mop; and having thus resumed the part of heathen warriors or *tevoro—i.e.*, devils—they proceeded, on April 12, 1876, to attack and burn the Christian villages of Naudi and Nandronga, and ate sundry women. They also attacked several Christian villages on the banks of the Singatoko river; but here the marauders were repulsed, and their own villages burned. They then attacked a village in the mountains, the people of which were Christians, and had supplied food to the Government forces. The villagers, old men, women, and children, took refuge in a cave, where the cannibals soon followed, guarding the entrances, and firing on them at intervals during the night. In the morning a party of friendly natives and police (or, as the people still call them, *sotiers—i.e.*, soldiers) came to the rescue, and routed the *tevoro*.

Sir Arthur was from the beginning anxious to avoid anything like a collision between white men and brown, and was therefore determined, if possible, to treat this disturbance as a police question, without requiring any aid from English troops. He was confident, moreover, that with the assistance of friendly chiefs, the matter could be satisfactorily settled, and that, too, at very small cost, before troops could even arrive from the colonies or elsewhere; so he resolved to dispense with all red tape—an article which only appeared on the scene once, and that in a rarely useful capacity, when Mr Maudslay, sorely puzzled how the Governor's bodyguard could carry their ammunition, being clad in short kilts, with neither pockets nor belts, instructed them how to make belts with bits of canvas, sewed with red tape, which was happily found in the Governor's despatch-box. That was on a special occasion, when Sir Arthur (determined to see everything for himself) insisted on visiting the mountains in person, accompanied by Mr Maudslay. Before starting on a march of some danger, it occurred to Mr Maudslay to examine the arms of the guard. They consisted of most rotten old muskets. He says he carefully avoided firing one himself, but happily no accident occurred in testing them.

It certainly is a marvel that no lives were lost from the use of such weapons—rusty old flint-lock or percussion-cap muskets, which

had been lying by in store for many years, all more or less decayed: and these were in the hands of men accustomed to wield only spears and clubs. I think Captain Knollys' force had only twenty Snider rifles, and a scanty supply of ammunition for even these, which were the backbone of the force. As to the old Tower muskets, some even of those selected as being the best, proved useless on reaching fighting-ground. A considerable amount of firing was always necessary to clear the bush round any place where they encamped, to frighten lurking foes.

When it was found that a collision with the Kai Tholos was inevitable, Sir Arthur sent to all the friendly chiefs to ask each for a small detachment of picked men. Double or treble the number asked for were sent, and a magnificent body of men was thus mustered, all eager for the fray. One body of 150 men from Bau came to Nasova to report themselves to the Governor before starting for the seat of war. All had their faces blackened to prevent the sun from blistering them—and savage indeed is the effect of this hideous cosmetic. They were almost all dressed alike in drapery of white *tappa*, and the *liku* (fringe kilt) of black glossy water-weed, like horse-hair: they had streamers of *tappa* floating from their arms and head. All were armed with old Tower muskets. They marched on to the *rara*—the green lawn before the house—and there performed the wildest devil *méké*, ending with unearthly yells. It was a very striking scene. Then they advanced, two or three at a time, throwing themselves into wild attitudes, brandishing their weapons, which formerly would have been spears or clubs, and trying who could make the most valiant boast concerning his intended prowess.[1] One cried, "I go to the mountains; my feet shall eat grass." This was to express his eager speed. Another: "I long to be gone; I crave to meet the foe. You need not fear; here is your safeguard." "This is only a musket," cried another, flourishing his weapon; "but *I* carry it." Said the next: "We go to war, what hinders that we *fill all the ovens?*" (I fear that man hankered after the flesh-pots of Fiji!) Another, holding up his musket, cried, "This is the bridge over which you English shall pass into the mountains." "Why do you white men cry out? *We* go to the mountains, and will bruise even the rocks." The second company came up stately, and only one acted spokesman. "This is Bau, that is enough." Others gambolled about, extolling their (imaginary) club by name, as in olden days. When each had had his say, one advanced with a green twig, which he

[1] This ceremony is called *bole bole*, meaning to challenge.

laid at the feet of the Governor's native aide-de-camp. Then Mr Wilkinson made a little speech for the Governor, and a gift of symbolical whales' teeth, which the messenger received crouching, and carried them to the corps, who also crouched low to receive them. Two huge turtles and other good food were then given, that they might feast before re-embarking on the Government steamer which carried them to the seat of war.

Nearly the whole force of native police had already been despatched to the mountains, where a permanent camp had for some time been established at Nasauthoko, on the Singatoko river, in the western half of Viti Levu. Mr Gordon did a sketch of this camp, showing two circular camps, each containing about a dozen native houses inside a fence of reeds on an earthen wall, then a ditch, and a second and third palisade. This stands on a small piece of level ground, about 2000 feet above the sea, and surrounded by hills of about 5000 feet. Round this the police force had made large gardens, extending to the river, where they raise yam, *taro*, and bananas for food.

The Governor appointed Captain Knollys commander-in-chief of the police and all these irregular forces, with Mr Gordon and Mr Le Hunte as sub-generals. Messrs Carew, Wilkinson, and Hefferman accompanied them as interpreters, being all men thoroughly acquainted with the chiefs and the people. Dr Macgregor was surgeon to the forces. The little army was divided into three bodies, whose common object was to prevent the enemy from reaching the great forests near the Singatoko, where they would have been very dangerous neighbours to the Christian tribes, and very difficult to dislodge.

The contingent of which Mr Gordon had command, consisted of 1200 undisciplined undrilled men of different tribes, each accustomed to render implicit obedience to their own chief only; and all those chiefs were jealous one of another, and always on the alert to scent out slights. Mr Gordon says his principal work consisted not so much in ordering details of fighting, as in taking a general direction, and preserving friendly relations between these chiefs, and smoothing their suspicions one of another. His task was rapidly and successfully accomplished. After sundry strongholds had been stormed and captured, several villages burned, and a considerable number of firearms seized, the cannibal tribes on the Singatoko surrendered, and 848 prisoners were taken. Of these, thirty-seven were known murderers, and were tried as such; thirty-five were found guilty, and of these, fourteen were summarily and

most deservedly executed—the Governor being present to sanction the proceedings, and confirm the sentences: nine were shot and five hung. Their mode of death was regulated by the degree of their guilt, the worst criminals being accounted those who were actually receiving pay from the English Government, at the same time as they were in league with the cannibals. The prisoners were all distributed among friendly villages, where for a while they will have to work as labourers, till it is judged safe to let them return to their own districts. Once they have yielded themselves prisoners, they never dream of escaping—that would be contrary to the Fijian code of honour; so they merely require a nominal guard. This was in the latter part of June.

Meanwhile Captain Knollys was greatly astonishing the foe in his district by sparing their growing crops, which was quite a new idea in Fijian warfare (where hitherto the first aim of an enemy had been to ravage the land, cut down the bread-fruit and banana trees, and burn the villages). He says the people at one place, Nambutautau, fortified their town by digging pit-falls in the long grass, and in these they placed sharp-pointed bamboos, ready to impale the unwary! The mountain-towns are perched in all sorts of nooks, among great boulders of rock, or hidden in clumps of bushes, or in cliffs of the rock. It is a country fortified by nature, having precipitous crags honeycombed with caves, and clothed with dense forest. The natives throw up earth-works and bamboo fences further to strengthen their intrenchments. Sundry of these rock-fortresses were places of very great strength, but were nevertheless surprised and captured.

I think Mr Le Hunte was chiefly in charge of the camp at Nasauthoko, which was a less exciting post, but one equally essential to the success of the whole.

About July 10th, Captain Knollys learnt that a party of the cannibals had retreated to a certain valley. Dr Macgregor was with him, and they started in pursuit with about 200 men. They halted for supper, then waited till the moon rose—the men whiling away the time with quaint boasting, such as I have already described. Then came a difficult night-march through the forest, crossing streams and deep gorges. At daybreak they reached the Naindua caves, where huge boulders of conglomerate rock have fallen in, so as effectually to conceal the entrance. The whole valley is a network of caves, with a river flowing at the bottom of the gorge. The *tevoro* (devils) were firing from many hidden crevices, their presence only betrayed by an occasional puff of smoke.

They were, however, driven out, and ten men and sixty women and children captured. It was found that some of the worst men had only returned from Levuka a couple of weeks previously. They had been working for white men on a plantation in Taviuni, so that process does not appear to be necessarily an improving one.

A nicely roasted human leg was lying on a mat, with cooked *taro*, neatly laid out for breakfast for the devil priest, or rather priest of the *vatu kalou*—*i.e.*, war-god. This old *bete*—*i.e.*, priest—was hideous to look upon,—a noted cannibal and excessive drinker of *yangona*, the result of which was that his skin was whitish, and he had become a sort of albino. Very disgusting he was, and yet his devotion to his son, a sickly lad, was so pathetic, that his captors were really touched by it. He was taken in the act of escaping from his appetising breakfast, which he doubtless sorely regretted, and which received decent burial.

In the promiscuous firing that followed, several wounded men fell over the cliffs into the river. As a party retreated, routed, one man, thinking himself beyond the reach of fire, could not resist a little bravado, and coming to a dead halt, he proceeded, with all the dandyism of a feast-day, to arrange the long folds of white *tappa* which floated in airy drapery, while he waved his great war-fan and challenged the foe, *Vaka viti* (Fiji fashion), to come and be eaten, and he would roast them all. Dr Macgregor took a deliberate aim with his Snider rifle at 600 yards, and, greatly to his own amazement, hit the astonished man, who fled wounded in the left arm. A week later he was captured, and became great friends with the Doctor, who naturally took especial interest in healing the wounds of his own production.

The Doctor's work has greatly astonished the cannibals, who marvel to see a man tending and healing his foes. He has taught them a new name for his profession, declaring himself much aggrieved at being called "carpenter of death," when he is truly a "man of life;" so the Fijian dictionary owes him a new word. He performed one very difficult operation quite alone, in presence of a wondering crowd. It was necessary to amputate the leg of one of the prisoners, so he made such preparations as were possible, and commenced operations, when, as he was in the act of administering chloroform (*wai ni mothe*, the water of sleep), he perceived that his assistant was quite drunk. It was necessary to have him at once forcibly removed, and the only other white man in the place was Mr Gordon, who was very ill with fever. So here he found himself alone with the patient under chloroform, surrounded

by a great circle of wild auxiliary tribes, all well accustomed to cut up human limbs for the larder, but wholly unable to understand the present proceeding. It was a difficult position. The operation must be performed, or certain death was inevitable; so he proceeded with a most difficult task, which happily proved quite successful, and the amazement of the spectators knew no bounds. The grateful patient, on recovering, demanded that the Doctor, who had deprived him of a leg, should supply a new one, and insisted on his keeping him into the bargain![1]

One very sad incident in the cave-warfare was the death of a poor little girl aged seven, who was accidentally shot through the heart.

The next places from which the foe had to be dislodged were the Naquaquatambua caves, which are a nest of large caves round a deep hollow—naturally a very strong post, and further fortified by the inmates. The entrance to the principal cave is by a cleft in the rock, not more than six feet wide, though perhaps twenty in height, and well concealed by the network of roots of a great *Mbaka* (Fiji banyan), the interstices of the roots being filled up with rock-work, so as to form an outer wall, with loop-holes, through which to fire at assailants. Within is a large high cave in which were stored guns, ammunition, and provisions—yams, pigs, and *yangona;* while in an inner cave, beside a stream of water, were enormous stores of yams, whales' teeth, *masi*, abundant firewood, and all things needful to hold out for a long siege. From the principal cave low passages lead to other caves, and these again have outlets; and all these were carefully concealed and well fortified: some could only be entered on hands and knees.

Altogether the post was one which might have been held for ever, and when first the little Christian army was descried, on the hill facing them, the *tevoro* amused themselves by a little of the usual boasting; but it seems their hearts failed them, for ere long

[1] This is by no means an exceptional instance. A favour conferred seems to be generally considered as giving a claim to further kindness. The experience of the missionaries has always been, that if their medical skill availed to restore the sick to health, their patients considered themselves entitled to receive food and raiment, and also to have a right to demand anything else they fancied. Mr Calvert quotes the case of a native whose hand was shattered by the bursting of a musket. The captain of a small fishing vessel took pity on the sufferer, had his hand amputated, and kept him on board for two months. At parting, the patient told the captain that he must give him a musket, in consideration of his having stayed on board so long; and on this being refused, the man went ashore and proved his sense of obligation by burning the drying-houses in which his benefactor stored his fish.

a chief came out with a *soro* (*i.e.*, an atonement offering). This was refused, so he returned to the cave, and presently reappeared at the head of twenty-four men, vowing that only the women and one old man remained within. However, there was reason to believe that there were many more, and Captain Knollys explored as far as he dared venture; but as many of the caves could only be approached by crawling on hands and knees through low passages, and as the enemy occasionally fired from hidden openings, it was necessary to wait in patience. At last one man, who said he was the chief of the caves, declared he would come out in the morning, but not till then. Captain Knollys told him he must not come out, whereupon, from sheer spirit of opposition, out he came!

A friendly chief, called Rovobokolo, was appointed to guard one cave full of people. He did so for two days and nights, but did not at all appreciate being fired at by unseen foes; so by a happy inspiration he suddenly cried out to bid them escape for their lives, as the *sotiers* (soldiers) had effected an entrance, and were about to fire into them. This was a pure romance, but it had the desired effect of bringing the foe to light. Forthwith they rushed out, and were of course taken prisoners—in all sixty-one men, and a great many women and children.

There still remained a third set of caves at Nunuwai. It was, I think, on the 23d of July that the besieging force reached them. They lie along the bed of a stream, in a deep gulch, heavily wooded, quite filled up by great boulders fallen from above, and forming caves, only to be reached by crawling through crevices. These are innumerable, each forming a loop-hole through which a hidden foe could safely fire out upon assailants; consequently several of these were killed, only discovering their danger by a sudden flash from some hidden loop-hole. It was just as unpleasant a place to have to storm as you can possibly imagine.

Happily the *tevoro* appeared to be divided in their own minds, and, after much parley, one party agreed to surrender, but wished to bring their women with them—and these were in an inner cave, which could only be reached by diving through the water, under a rock, but each time their heads rose from the water the non-surrender party received them with levelled guns. They then expressed their determination to die in the caves, but after two days Captain Knollys hit on the odd expedient of enlisting some of the prisoners already taken as his allies, by promising them easier terms than they had any right to expect. So these entered the caves,

and held long parley with the besieged, persuading about half of them to surrender. As the remainder still held out, they took up their quarters in the cave for the night, and amused themselves by blowing a war-shell, which so affected the delicate nerves of the *tevoro* that they craved permission to come out—a permission which was withheld till morning, in order to enhance its value. Amongst other relics, Captain Knollys found the bones of one of his scouts, who had been killed some time previously: he had been cooked and his bones picked clean. About fifty men were here captured, and the most grievous criminals having been tried again in presence of the Governor, six were most deservedly executed, and the rest condemned to various terms of imprisonment or servitude in the villages of the allies, where they are sure of very kind treatment.

Of course the judicial part of this business was the most trying to all concerned; but for once, I believe that all parties here are of one mind in agreeing that the executions were positively necessary, and a most wise measure. In every instance the man executed was either a notorious murderer of the worst type, or else a deserter from Government service, actually drawing Government pay. It is believed that this example once set will deter future malcontents from trying this little game again, and that much bloodshed will thus be averted, and a source of perpetual danger entirely extinguished. On the other hand, the leniency shown to the mass of the prisoners, the care of the wounded by skilled hands, with all medical appliances, are a wholly new, and to them incomprehensible, phase of British warfare.

Our people (the Christians) were wonderfully quick in practising the mercy commanded; and though they keep up the old wild dances and songs round the body of each fallen foe as they bring him in, there has been no tendency to make a *bokolo* of him, except in one instance, when one of the wildest of the friendly tribes (our allies) brought to Captain Knollys' camp the body of a hostile chief just slain, and after much palaver (being very hungry) craved permission to eat him. Of course this was peremptorily refused, and immediate burial ordered. But when Captain Knollys sent a company of his own men in the morning to see that it had been done properly, they found the body barely a foot deep, which allowed room for just a suspicion that some hungry men were waiting for a convenient season to dig it up. Of course the foe had no scruples on the subject, and I fear they had several hearty meals at the expense of the assailants.

It is fortunate they did not find out how short of provisions the

besiegers were, for at one time their commissariat was at such a low ebb that for two whole days they had nothing to eat but a few taro-tops which they had the good luck to find—taro-tops being something like old turnip-tops and leaves. This, while the enemy had abundant stores of provisions! It is wonderful too, that, intrenched as they were in a series of positions, each of which was practically impregnable, they should have yielded so readily; and marvellously fortunate, too, that so few of their stray shots should have done any damage. The only white man touched was Dr Macgregor, who received a slight wound near the corner of the eye, which happily was not serious.

There have been many most picturesque incidents in this little war. To begin with, there is the way in which the warriors march to battle, as if going to a dance, with scouts running on ahead of them fluttering large grass or palm-leaf fans, adorned with long streamers or ribbons like a Highlander's bagpipes, only made of native cloth. With these they pretend to sweep away any hidden foes who may be lying in ambush.

Then, too, is it not wonderful to think of what a war in this country has hitherto meant, and the appalling horrors involved? And now to think that, among all these so-called savage warriors, none should have in any way brought discredit on their character of chivalrous Christian soldiers. On the contrary, each body of men brought its own chaplain; and in all the excitement of a struggle with hereditary foes, which but a few years ago would have been a scene of horror and revolting bloodshed and crime, the camps were kept free from taint.

It savours rather of an army of Puritans to know that every morning, at the very first streak of dawn, each separate tribe composing that little army mustered in array to join the teacher in saying the Lord's Prayer, and a short prayer suited to the requirements of the day. And every evening, after the excitement of the day was over, each house separately had reading of the Scriptures, singing, and prayer; and every man in the force knelt as reverently as he would have done at family worship in his peaceful village home. I wonder of how many so-called civilised armies all this could be said?

But to return to the caves. The last had scarcely been captured when Mr Gordon became utterly prostrate from what has proved to be a very serious attack of low typhoid fever. I told you he had been here for a few days after finishing work in his own district, and before proceeding to join Captain Knollys; and we

think he must have contracted it here, as there have been several bad cases of the same type, and at least two men have died of it, including the builder of this house. The caves were right in the interior of Viti Levu; and as I mentioned to you, the return march was fearfully trying, both for a sick man and those in charge of him—Fijian mountain paths being pretty severe work for the strongest man. Happily Dr Macgregor was able to be in close attendance.

To make matters worse, they had literally nothing that he could eat. The Doctor thought he had secured a prize in an old hen belonging to a teacher, but the owner begged she might be spared, as she was "giving milk"—a striking discovery in ornithology! But it seems this is the Fijian equivalent for *laying*. I suppose that as cows and hens are both imported animals, it was assumed that the same term would be equally expressive. But the teacher promised to bring some excellent eggs to make flip, and soon returned with a dozen. On the first being cracked a fine chicken appeared,—so *that* was not of much use! At last they reached the coast, where a hospitable planter took care of the patient till a steamer, specially chartered for the occasion, arrived to take away most of the troops and about a hundred of the worst prisoners, who are to have a turn of hard work for their country's good.

The said steamer is one hired temporarily from New Zealand; but the luckless Government steamer Fitzroy, which was bought for £7000 when we came here, ran on to a coral-reef last month, and is a total wreck,—another bit of ill-luck for this poverty-stricken land. Her captain was the steadiest and most experienced man in the group, so it is a good proof of what dangerous navigation this is.

Here Mr Gordon found an empty house, save for the presence of Mr and Mrs Abbey, the excellent major-domo and his admirable wife, who have nursed him with tenderest devotion, and are now rewarded by seeing him steadily amending. But for some days he was so very ill that an express was sent to Suva, in Viti Levu, to summon the Governor, who, with Captain Knollys and Baron von Hügel, had gone there, on their way back, to see Lady Gordon and her children, who are staying there for change of air.

Just at this moment, I, knowing nothing of all this, returned unexpectedly from a three weeks' cruise round Vanua Levu with my friends the Langhams, with whom I have now travelled for thirteen weeks in districts which otherwise would have been to

me wholly inaccessible. But I have not time now to tell you anything about our cruise, so you must be content with this letter for the present. I forgot to tell you that we have a new inmate in the house—a remarkably nice young cannibal. His father is one of the worst cannibal chiefs captured by Captain Knollys, to whom both father and son have quite a romantic attachment!

Note.—On the 28th October 1876 the Governor issued a proclamation of free pardon to all the mountain-tribes who had fought against Government, granting free permission to all who had been carried as prisoners to other districts, and to those who might still be concealed in the bush or in caves, to return to their own districts, and rebuild their towns and cultivate their lands, only stipulating that the fortified places must not be reoccupied, but that sites should be selected more suitable to the peaceful inhabitants of a quiet land. Even at the date of this proclamation, he found that the disturbed districts were assuming an aspect of security and civilisation hitherto undreamt of. New towns were rapidly springing up by the rivers and in the plains, and cultivation was carried on in perfect security, in places which hitherto could not be worked at all, or only by armed men. Formerly constant distrust reigned between the different tribes—especially between the Christians and heathens; and not without good cause, as four hundred inhabitants of one Christian town had been treacherously clubbed by their heathen neighbours, having been induced by false pretences to leave their town. Now the wild tribes had all adopted the kilt of native cloth, and cut their hair to a reasonable length—sure proofs of general respectability. They had also welcomed the native Christian teachers, who had come to live in almost every village.

A year later—October 1877—Sir Arthur Gordon revisited these districts. He found satisfactory progress everywhere—the people devoting their energies to agriculture instead of war—all, nominally at least, Christians; good new villages; good riding-paths (one forty miles in length from the coast to the permanent headquarters of native police at Fort Carnarvon); and these, though of purely native construction, were led by easy gradients along the hillsides, instead of following the steepest ridges, according to Fijian custom. Everywhere peace, order, and plenty prevailed. He was especially pleased to find one of the *tevoro* chiefs, whom he had pardoned when under sentence of death (causing him to place his hands in his and swear fealty), now a useful and zealous officer of the Government. At Fort Carnarvon, about a thousand representatives of the wild tribes assembled to meet him and hear his words; and

several hundred school-children, from the neighbouring villages, gathered together for one of their picturesque school-examinations. A large proportion of the children could read and write well—a most satisfactory result of one year's tuition. According to invariable custom, the school-examination was enlivened by many of the wild, but often graceful and poetic, *mékés—i.e.*, descriptive songs and dances. After several spear-dances, and one descriptive of a cow protecting her calf, and another of a hawk fluttering, came one which Sir Arthur thus describes in his private journal:—

"Nasaucoko fan *méké*. Nai kalukalu, the Stars. This was a very curious *méké*. Two circular enclosures of bamboo, about five feet high, were erected, within which two parties of dancers began to whirl round, waving white *masi* fans over their heads. Gradually, one by one, they came out of the door of their enclosure opposite each other. This was the rising of the stars. They met, danced the usual sort of dance, and, at one part of it, threw away their fans. This was to represent the shooting-stars."

On the following day he writes—

"*Thursday.*—To-day Buli Nadrau and all his people came to do their homage. Very pretty they looked, coming over the hill in an interminable line. The old gentleman was tremendously weighted in his state-robes, which were only put on him by his attendants a few yards before he reached me, and were, after he had passed me, at once taken off again, and presented. *Six hundred feet* and more of black (or rather grey) *masi* were heaped on him, and that not in the shape of an enormous train, like Tui Cakau's, but all draped and festooned over his person and head.

"*Friday.*—Walked over to Korolevu, where I was received in a fashion which I have never seen elsewhere. The people were arranged in rows on each side of the *rara*. As I came into it, all the folks inclined their heads to the left shoulder, and, as I passed them, sank down into a slanting position to the left, like a row of nine-pins. . . . Most picturesque was the offering to me of the *magiti* (feast), by moonlight, as I sat on the marble steps of the old *luré* (devil temple), destroyed long ago. Most striking too was the scene in the village afterwards,—each household grouped in front of its own door, and later the sound of prayers from the various houses. Every one of the people here was, last year, a prisoner. Later I strolled up and down by myself alone, but in perfect security. . . . From one house I heard the voices of a number of women repeating the Lord's Prayer. What a change from last year, when there was nothing here but heaps of ashes!"

CHAPTER XXI.

A PLANTER'S HOUSE—ANGORA GOATS—A LOVELY SHORE—SERICULTURE—THE MOSQUITO PLAGUE.

NANANU, A SMALL ISLE OFF VITI LEVU,
Sept. 30, 1876.

DEAR NELL,—At last I have reached the Robinson Crusoe home, about which we used to conjure up such visions of romance, whenever a letter from the far-away Fiji Isles reached the old vicarage in Northumberland. I came here last Tuesday with Baron von Hügel. Captain Knollys lent us his beautiful boat and a crew of native police: we had the great luck of a fair wind, and made the run in eight hours—which is exceptionally good time. You who have never been much in the way of travelling in small ships and boats can scarcely realise how tantalising are the constant delays to which we are liable from wind and weather.

You would think that a home within eight hours' run of the capital cannot be very isolated. Yet such are the difficulties of getting about and of leaving home, that since the day—now ten years ago—when Mr Leefe brought his bride here—a bright pretty girl of eighteen, with a tiny baby daughter—her sole expeditions have been one three months' trip to Australia, when she was very ill, and one visit of six weeks to Levuka to stay with a friend, whose two children died while she was there,—so that was not a cheerful visit. And though a boat occasionally touches here, no ladies have ever done so except once, when Mrs Havelock called for three hours; and once also, some years ago, when a brother-planter fled here with his wife and family for refuge from the cannibals, and then the two families had to stow themselves as best they could in the one house of two rooms.

Happily, there is now an extra house, or rather quite a group of half-a-dozen small semi-Fijian houses, which severally act as feeding-room, sitting-room, sleeping-rooms, kitchen, store-room, and silkworm house. These are all clustered beneath the cool shadow of a couple of old trees, one of which spreads its great boughs towards the kitchen, and acts as larder,—for from these branches hang such pieces of kid or goat's flesh as may be in stock. Here are the rough-and-ready essentials of an open-air carpenter's shop; and beneath a central tree a small matted enclosure acts as the family

bath-room, to which the labour-boys bring buckets of fresh water to fill a great wooden tub. But infinitely more pleasant is the delicious sea-bathing, in which we can here indulge most freely, without any dread of sharks. Imagine the charm of walking straight out of your bedroom on to the purest white sand, and plunging just as deep as you please in the very clearest water, warm enough to make it delightful to lie and bask there at early morning and at sunset! Sometimes two brown maidens come to disport themselves with us in the water, and they and Ethel swim and dive like fishes —swimming long distances under the water, and coming up, when least expected, to seize me, in hopes of startling me with an impression of sharks.

Ethel, the tiny baby of ten years ago, is now a picturesque tall girl of eleven, a winsome wide-awake child, and a real little lady, but a thorough bushwoman, versed in all arts of foraging and bush-cooking, and her mother's helper in many a care.

My arrival here was a funny example of how we do things in Fiji. My visit has been under discussion for a whole year; and once, owing to miscarriage of letters, Mr Leefe even came to Levuka to fetch me when I had gone up the Rewa! This time I had written about a week before starting, to announce my coming. That letter has only just arrived a week after me. So of course I was not expected; and further, both Mrs Leefe and Ethel were suffering from severe cold and headache. However, I was most cordially welcomed, and shown the various objects of interest, but saw no symptom of any special quarters being awarded to me. At bed-time I was hospitably invited to share a bed with my hostess and her daughter—Mr L. and the Baron occupying a tiny house outside. I preferred a shake-down in the drawing-room, and at early dawn awoke in time to accompany Mrs Leefe and Ethel to milk the goats—which on paper sounds very pretty, and which in fine weather is really so. But when you come to the reality of having to start at 5 A.M. every morning of your life—fine weather or foul, in sickness or in health—and walk a mile and a half up and down very steep slippery hill-paths, which in wet weather are mere slides of red mud,—and, when the milking is done, return by the same path, making a walk of three miles before the day's work has actually begun, you can imagine that this pretty pastoral scene becomes a tolerably fatiguing item in daily life.

Of course to me there was the great charm of novelty—an early morning in lovely sunlight, blue sea and cocoa-palms on every side, and the very picturesque flock of goats. One of Mr Leefe's most

anxious experiments has been the introduction of Angora goats,—lovely white creatures, with long silky fleece. At great expense he procured two pair, and having killed off all the wild he-goats on the island, these beautiful strangers were established as monarchs of the isle. So the flock is now exceedingly pretty. There are 230 mothers, of all varieties of colour, and each has either one or two pure white kids, all, without exception, taking after their father. Alas! many of them are already orphans, one of these splendid fellows having met with a most untimely end. Its long fleece got entangled in a thorny lemon-bush, which held it prisoner, and it was not found till it was dead. The second narrowly escaped the same fate. It got astray, and was caught in a thicket by its horns, and was not discovered till the following day. It was, however, reported missing at night, and all hands turned out to seek for the lost father of the flock. Torches were lighted, and the search continued for some hours; at last it was given up as being vain, and all returned to sleep, when suddenly an alarm of fire was given, and the whole hill was seen to be in a blaze: a torch, carelessly dropped in the dry grass, had started a fire which spread rapidly, destroying a multitude of promising young palm-trees recently planted. Such are the risks of plantation life.

The fine silky hair is not the sole advantage of introducing the Angora goat. Its flesh is said to be more tender than mutton, with a slight flavour of venison; and, moreover, such a flock will thrive where sheep could not find a living.[1]

It was nearly eight o'clock before we got back from the milking, and from feeding the poultry and the pigs, and you may believe we did enjoy our good hot tea. But Mrs Leefe was so ill that she had to go to bed again. Generally she is very strong, and thinks nothing of walking ten or twelve miles.

I thought it was now time to establish my regular sleeping-quarters. My host most generously offered to give up his own little grass hut for me; but on looking round, I discovered a tiny lumber-room partitioned off the dining-room, which is a house apart, and so close to the sea that I could almost step from the window into the water. I petitioned for the use of this small room, and with much help from Ethel and an acute Solomon Island girl, I cleared out many sacks of cuttle-fish bones, maize, and "produce"

1 Last year this flock had increased to about two thousand five hundred head; and so excellent is the quality of fine long silky hair yielded, that at the great International Exhibition, held at Sydney in 1880, the second award for Angora hair was made to R. B. Leefe of Nananu.

of all sorts, swept it out, laid down mats, fixed up a tiny bedstead, drove in nails on which to hang up clothes, and hung one of my waterproof sheets as a door, and so made quite a cosy wee den, in which I am now comfortably established. A "bedstead" would be quite an unnecessary adjunct in a Fijian house, with its flooring of soft grass and many mats; but here we have a wooden floor which would be too hard for comfort: besides, where maize has been stored, rats are wont to congregate. My little room has only one drawback, namely, that just at the window there remains one immovable trace of its former use—that is, the corn grinder, in which the men's daily rations are ground, with such intolerable noise as invariably to drive me up the hill to escape from it. What must it be for the wretched native who has to do it, all the time receiving general abuse for the hideous row which he cannot avoid making!

I think the plantation hands here are exclusively foreign labour, all the Fijians having been turned off when Mr Leefe purchased the whole island. He also has property on the mainland of Viti Levu, where his nephew Harry lives as superintendent, and keeps a store for the supply of cloth, lamps, sardines, tools, and other necessaries of life—a great convenience in this remote place. Most of his customers are natives.

On our way here from Ovalau, we sailed close along the north-east coast of Viti Levu, which is most picturesque,—a fine rugged land, with narrow valleys hemmed in by great cliffs, and running down to the shore, where little villages nestle beneath great trees, from which hang the fishers' nets. I thought several points exceedingly beautiful, and hope to retrace the ground more leisurely and secure some good sketches. As we came nearer here, the scene became bleaker and less attractive. Still the general effect of the coast, as seen from this house, is like some of the better parts of Ross-shire; and the narrow strait which separates this isle from the mainland, is like a fine Highland loch.

Nananu itself is rather a low flat island, in shape something like a star-fish, whence you perceive that you cannot walk far in any direction without looking down on the sea—the bluest sea, with lines and patches of vividly emerald green, marking where the coral-reef rises almost to the surface. All the centre of the star-fish is a great grassy hill, but each of its many arms is edged with a belt of magnificent old trees, which overshadow the whitest of coral-sand, and in some places quite overhang the water. You are tempted to bathe at every turn. One bay in particular is quite lovely. I have never seen another quite so fascinating in any

country. It is an immense horse-shoe of the purest white sand, where for a mile and a half you can walk along the water's edge, shaded by noble old *mdelo*, *mbaka*, *tavola*, and *eevie* trees, making a belt of dense cool verdure.

In every available corner of the land Mr Leefe is planting thousands of young cocoa-nut trees, which are expected to yield a good return some six years hence, provided no hurricane sweeps the isles. Many planters are now trusting chiefly to their nuts since cotton has so utterly failed. It is sad in so many places to see great tracts of forsaken cotton-fields,[1] with their pods of white soft fluff, which it no longer pays to collect.

The cotton-bush bears a lovely pale-yellow flower with a deep claret-coloured centre, precisely similar to that of the *vau*, the common hybiscus, which forms the scrub of the isles, and yields the fibre so largely used by the natives. Curiously enough, an almost identical blossom is borne by a troublesome but beautiful weed which grows profusely in the deserted cotton-fields. A peculiar kind of brilliant beetle swarms in the cotton.

The neglected fields are sadly suggestive of the fortunes of their owners. For the invariable history of almost every planter is a tale of trouble and loss,—of large sums of money sunk, and now yielding no return whatever. The varieties in the story are generally whether the crops have been destroyed by hurricanes, or the house and all that it contained was burnt to the ground,—often both in succession.[2]

I constantly hear lamentable stories of the hardships which some of these gentlemen are, even now, enduring. I hear of some, personally known to my hosts, who for months together have tasted nothing but sweet-potatoes and yams, with water for their only drink: occasionally they struggle to rear a few fowls, not for home use, but to be exchanged for the luxuries of tea and sugar—and even these fowls generally come to grief. Of course goats can only be kept by the privileged few who possess a whole island. On the

[1] By recent accounts, I hear that much of this cotton has again been taken into cultivation, and that large areas of the flat land near the Raki Raki river have now been ploughed and turned into a sugar plantation.

[2] Since the above was written, the home at Nananu has shared in this too common fate. A few months later, the family were awakened by sudden cry of fire, and, as usual with houses of such combustible material, a few moments sufficed to reduce the pleasant Robinson Crusoe home to ashes. The long-treasured piano, books, knick-knacks, all irreplaceable treasures, were gone, and the family left with only the night-dresses in which they stood. Of course it does not take long to rebuild a house in the Fijian style, and perhaps the new house is better than the ramshackle old place; but in so remote a home, new ornaments and books and keepsakes accumulate slowly; "and we cannot buy with gold the old associations."

mainland they would make havoc in the gardens of the natives, and however carefully tended, would give rise to many difficulties. Even a cow is not kept without much trouble on the score of trespass, and involves a lad to look after her; and I am told that there are families now living on Taviuni too poor to pay even one labour-boy to help on the plantation; indeed I heard of one case in which the father was too weak to work, and all the family were living on wild roots, dug up by the children!

My host, being a man of unbounded energy, blessed with a wife of the like temperament, has managed, by a hard struggle, to keep his head above water, and now ranks as an exceptionally well-to-do planter. Having his own "home farm," he is able occasionally to kill some sort of animal, and its flesh, fresh or salt, generally furnishes the table with meat; but if press of work prevents his having time to slay and prepare any beast, a large *papaw* tart, with a dish of yams and a pot of tea, suffices for palates not vitiated by over-much luxury. At present there is a sense of abundance in the house, for Mr Leefe has himself killed, skinned, and cut up a goat, the various portions of which now adorn the beautiful old tree larder; moreover, a small vessel has called here and left a barrel of flour, of which Mrs Leefe herself has made excellent scones. We are indebted to her skill for almost all our meals, her only assistant in the kitchen being a good-natured laughing boy from the Tokalau Isles, whose talents are as yet undeveloped. He manages to do the coarser laundry-work, with the help of a very wide-awake girl from the Solomon Isles (who, by the way, talks the prettiest English). But here, also, anything needing care or refinement falls to the mistress, who also has to attend to the family wardrobe; and hardest of all, to both mother and daughter, she has sole charge of Ethel's lessons, especially that most grievous task, her music lesson. For she has managed to retain one pleasant reminder of the old life in a most musical home, in her treasured piano, the solace of many an evening when the toil of day is over. I will not say that it is strictly in tune. No piano can be kept in order in this land of mildew and damp.

So Ethel is well on in music, but infinitely prefers out-of-doors occupations, and the companionship of all the living creatures, each of whom is a personal acquaintance—the poultry, the goats, the very pigs, whose name is legion. They live in a large pen by themselves near the sea, but are allowed to roam at large through the bush. At a given hour their supply of cocoa-nuts is carried to their pen, and a wooden *lali* (drum) is struck to summon them,

when they assemble with a rush. They are hideously tame, and come running up to meet any members of the family who may pass in that direction, and gambol cheerfully round them.

But one of the principal daily cares is that of attending to a great army of silk-worms, which have to be fed six times a-day: that means going out six times to gather fresh mulberry-leaves, each of which must be carefully dried. Then the trays have to be cleaned, the eggs examined, the newly-hatched worms carefully separated and placed on leaves to begin their new life. The cocoons have to be attended to, and guarded from the attacks of insects; in short, rearing silk-worms on this scale is a task requiring as much care and patience as any human nursery. This industry is an altogether new experiment in Fiji, where it might no doubt succeed, but for what will, I fear, prove an insuperable obstacle—namely, the price of labour here, as compared with that in the silk-growing districts of China. Here the whole work is at present done by Mrs Leefe and Ethel, as none of their people are sufficiently trustworthy to be trained as assistants. So you see the life of a planter's wife leaves small time for idle day-dreams or novel-reading! It needs a brave heart, and abundant courage and perseverance, to say nothing of physical strength, to fulfil such daily tasks.

To me, who have only to enjoy myself, there is an unspeakable charm in the easy-going open-air life here; and the air is wonderfully keen and bracing as compared with the climate of Levuka. We have had the thermometer at 74°, and have felt almost too cold. So all day long I wander about the isle, passing from one white sand bay to another, and keeping in the shelter of those great overhanging trees, whose dark foliage forms so perfect a screen from the ever-shining sun. The raised centre of the isle is, as I have told you, generally grassy; and here I sit morning and evening, overlooking the sea in every direction, and watching for the rare appearing of a sail. The only shade there, however, is that of the screw-pine, which grows abundantly, and makes an odd sketchable bit of foreground, with its long prickly leaves set screw-wise, and its roots like a cluster of white pillars, making the tree look as if it were walking on stilts. It bears a large scarlet or orange fruit, something like a pine-apple in appearance, but with so little on its woody sections to tempt the palate, that none save goat-herds, on whom the long day hangs heavy, care to gnaw them. True pine-apples have been planted in abundance, as also orange, lemon, and bread-fruit trees; so have the delicious native *kevecka*, which bears a fruit resembling a large transparent pink pear, and answers

the purpose of a cooling drink. Moreover, as I told you, Mr Leefe is planting thousands of young palms in every available crevice, on Sir Walter Scott's principle of "Aye be stickin' in a tree; it will be growing while ye are sleeping." Close round the house there is a small kitchen-garden in which grow tiny tomatoes and the tree-pea—a shrub which bears pods very like those of our common green pea.

Whenever Ethel can be spared from her home-duties she comes with me on my exploring expeditions, and sometimes carries a kettle, a small bottle of milk, and a little packet of tea and sugar; then, while I am sketching, she lights a fire and ministers to my comfort. The only drawback to the delightful shady nooks, which we prefer, is the multitude of mosquitoes which infest them. I am sure they scent out a fresh prey in me. Never shall I forget my first day here, when I settled down to make a careful study of a magnificent old banyan (identical, I think, with the *Ficus religiosa* of India). The mosquitoes assembled in myriads. Vainly did Ethel and a wild-looking brown goat-herd sit, one on each side of me, holding branches, with which to beat them off; and vainly did I slay six or eight at a time, so often as I could pause to slap one hand on the other. Thicker and thicker they swarmed (for there was not a breath of air stirring in the thicket where we sat); so at last we had to give it up and fly to cool our fevered hands and faces in the sea; then we lay under the orange-trees in the old garden, and ate ripe golden fruit to our hearts' content. Next time I go to sketch in any such sheltered spot, I shall hang up my mosquito-net to a tree, so as to lessen this maddening distraction—though, of course, it will be rather dazzling to draw looking through a fine white net.

How funny some of our incidents of common life would seem to you! Last night I was awakened by the grunting of pigs all round my window, and guessed that they had broken through their fence and got into the garden. So I jumped up and gave them chase wildly, and succeeded in driving them all out.

Mr Leefe owns a second small island, separated from this by a narrow channel; there he keeps another flock of goats, and yesterday went over to count them. He took us with him, much to Ethel's delight, as the Fijian shepherd has a pretty baby, which is her namesake and great pet. We saw a curious natural rock-bridge on the coast, concerning which, tradition says, a shark jumped through a cave and left this rock standing.

Baron von Hügel returned from the mainland this morning just

as we came back from the goat-milking. He has collected some new curiosities, and gave me a funny old cannibal fork. He returns to Nasova to-day, and takes this letter to the mail. He is full of the loveliness of various places he has seen, and says I must manage to go and do some sketching. But how? That is the difficulty. Mrs Leefe, who has never yet seen anything, even within a few miles of this place, says she would delight in going if only it could be managed, but she does not see how she can be spared from her many home-cares; and it is equally difficult for either Mr Leefe or Harry to get away. And you know I never dream of going anywhere alone; besides, Mr Leefe has sold his good boat, and now has only a very small one. So really I do not see how it can be managed, though it is most tantalising. However, something may develop.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE POTTERY DISTRICTS OF VITI LEVU—A CANNIBAL'S REGISTER—A NIGHT IN A CORN-SHED—FUNERAL OF RATU TAIVITA.

RATU PHILIMONE'S HOUSE, NA VATU (THE ROCK),
RAKI RAKI, *October* 10.

The difficulties have been overcome, and here I am on the mainland of beautiful Viti Levu. This is a delightful place to which Mr Leefe brought me about a week ago. Mrs Leefe provided us with a large basketful of provisions—newly-baked bread, and other good things; and on arriving here, we were most hospitably welcomed by the kindly native minister, Ratu Philimone, and his handsome pleasant wife Henrietta. The title Ratu marks the man who bears it as being of good birth; and this couple and their pretty children are of a very superior sort. Their house has quite a nice inner room, which they insisted on giving up to me, so I am really most comfortable here.

Mr Leefe was only able to stay one whole day, long enough to take me over a good deal of the neighbourhood. Then as its rare beauty proved more and more fascinating on further acquaintance, he left me here in the hospitable care of Ratu Philimone, not, however, till he had also placed me in the charge of the police! in the

person of Mr Jones, the officer of this district, who is most kind, and does his utmost to further all my wishes. So also does his friend and neighbour Mr Shinnock, who sends me a bottle of milk every morning, and one day a little pig's leg: and now I hear that he has killed a kid for my especial benefit. He has also lent me his horse Sweep, a steady old fellow, and able to canter, though not much used to carrying a lady. I find I have left the girths of my side-saddle at Nasova, but Mr Jones most kindly lends me his, which are of leather, and he himself now uses a rope. He has a wooden saddle with goat-skin cover. Truly did Captain Martin, our worthy skipper, remark that this is the country for makeshifts!

This place is well described by its name. It is really Na Vatu (The Rock), being a huge rock-mass, quite detached from the great Kauvandra range of mountains, and standing alone on a level shore. The village in which I am living is on the sea-level, but a steep path up the beautiful crag leads to a lovely village, called Nai Songoliko, which consists of a number of small houses perched wherever they can find room all over the cliff, almost hidden by bread-fruit and other bowering trees, which cling to the rock as if by magic. From this point a narrow spur runs inland, and the view from there is quite beautiful—the bluest sea, dotted with isles and tinted by patches of coral-reef, lying outspread to right and left of the cliff. Each of these villages has a tidy well-built church. I think I have explored every corner of the great rock, and many of the tiny homes which lie so quaintly niched among the rocky boulders. Some of the people produced hidden treasures, which they offered me for sale; and I have bought several good things, including some stone axes. I think I must have mentioned to you that these are only just now passing out of common use here: they are brought to us tied with native string to a piece of wood shaped like a bent knee. Sometimes I see instances of the actual transition from the stone to the iron age, when some lucky man, having got a Birmingham adze, rejects his old stone celt and ties his new acquisition on to the same wooden handle.

In one house I found a pretty young woman with a baby a fort night old. Both were covered from head to foot with turmeric, with which their clothes were also smeared. I believe this is a precaution against the devices of certain evil spirits, of whom many of the people still stand in as great awe as many a devout old Highlander does of the bogies and warlocks of our own mountains. Those dark ranges of the Kauvandra are the especial haunts of various fairies and brownies, and we have heard legends enough to

make us wish that some competent person would set about collecting them ere the old lore dies away.

All over this crag and the neighbourhood there are luxuriant masses of the intensely blue clitoria, as also of a bean which is good for food, and bears white blossoms. The effect of the white and blue is so charming that I have proclaimed a general offer of fish-hooks, needles, and thread to all children who will collect seeds for me. So every evening a little troop of traders await my return; and I have now amassed a quantity of seed, which I intend to sow broadcast all over the hill behind Nasova.

One of the chief places of interest in this neighbourhood is the town of Na Sava, which is peopled by the former inhabitants of the isle of Malaki, from which they were driven out by the whites as an act of vengeance for the murder of a white man whose boat touched on their inhospitable shore. That, at least, is one version of the story. Malaki lies just off this coast, and Mr Leefe took me to see it. It is a pleasant spot, grassy and wooded, but now left desolate. To its people is attributed the honour of having been the first in these isles to invent pottery, an art which is here carried to a perfection far surpassing anything found in other groups of the Pacific. I believe that pottery of some sort is found in all parts of Melanesia—the best specimens having been brought from New Guinea, and some also from the Admiralty Isles, New Britain, New Ireland, the Solomon Isles, New Hebrides, and New Caledonia. But these are all exceedingly coarse, and devoid of all artistic pretension. In Polynesia, on the other hand, the manufacture of pottery is apparently totally unknown.

The Fijians are, as you know, a mixed race—partly Polynesian, partly Melanesian. Whether they derived their first idea of pottery from their Melanesian ancestors, and then greatly improved upon it; or whether, as they themselves say, their master in the art was the mason-bee, it is impossible to determine. Certain it is that the form of the cooking and water vessels in use in every Fijian home greatly resembles that of the little clay nests which this busy creature builds in every convenient corner. On our glass windows, in the doorways, or under the eaves where the swallows of our own land are wont to place theirs, we find these little earthen homes, globular or oblong, with an opening at one side, terminating in a narrow neck or passage with turned-back lip.

I have often succeeded in detaching these unbroken, and they are perfect miniatures of the ordinary Fijian pots. They are made of the same blue clay, which the potter has learned to mix with

sand. Once the idea was started, other objects in nature soon suggested variety of form, such as the shell of the turtle and the form of various fruits. Considering the coarseness of the clay used, and the rude manner in which the pots are fashioned, wholly by hand and by rule of thumb, and considering, also, that the manufacturers are people whom the civilised world are wont to regard as utter savages, I think that when you see my collection you will be greatly impressed by the artistic beauty and immense variety of form thus produced. Naturally what are made for ordinary domestic purposes—*i.e.*, cooking and water pots—adhere pretty much to one type; but in the patterns with which these are decorated, and the manufacture of what we may call fancy articles, every potter follows her own taste, and the same exact form is very rarely reproduced. We have occasionally tried to get duplicates made to order, but the result has almost invariably been most unsatisfactory; and in no case will the potters of one district attempt to copy a piece which has been brought from some other island or district.

It is for this reason that I have, as I mentioned to you, taken so much trouble to paint careful studies of many of the principal pieces which have passed through our hands, to whichever collectors they have belonged. I suppose I have fully sixty such studies, several of which include two or three pieces. The objects vary in size, from small bowls or water-jars, six or eight inches in height, to great cooking-pots, three feet deep; and the colours range from richest golden to a deep red, running into green, the colour being chiefly due to the glaze. That which is commonly used is the heated resin of the *ndukua* pine, almost identical with the *kaurie* pine of New Zealand, which yields the beautiful amber-like gum.

There are certain forms which find general favour, and are very commonly made. Such are, clusters of four or six globes, the size of an orange, all connected one with another, and each having a hollow tube leading from one aperture at the top, by which all the globes are filled. On the same principle are rude imitations of canoes, joined together by one handle; also turtles, single or in pairs. These are of a very conventional type.

When I was staying at Bau (which, tiny as it is, is divided into six towns), I was greatly interested in watching the potters of So So at work. So So is the fisher town, and the potters are generally wives of the fishermen. There I spent some hours in the picturesque hut of an old crone, trying to persuade her to model her turtles from a living one which was walking about on the mats;

but she preferred her own monstrous ideal, and chuckled with delight every time the fins and feet of mine fell off.

There, and I think also at Rewa, the women just beat out a flat piece of clay on their hand, and then gradually mould it into a cup-like form, with the help of a smooth stone held inside, and a wooden spatula with which to beat the outer surface. When their modelling is finished, the pieces are left to dry in a house for six or eight days, and are then taken to a quiet sheltered nook betwixt the sea and a great rock. Here a pile of light wood and small sticks is built, and on this the pots are laid. Dry grass is lightly piled over them, and small twigs over all. This pile is set on fire, and kept burning for about half an hour. Then, while still hot, the cooking-pots are well rubbed with an infusion of *tiri*—*i.e.*, mangrove-bark—which is a dark-red dye, and gives the pots both colour and a slight glaze. Ornamental pots, and those for water, are kept in the house from four to eight days. They are first baked with a light grass-fire, afterwards with wood, and while still hot are glazed with the *ndakua* resin I mentioned previously.

There are slight variations in the process in different parts of the group, as on the north of Vanua Levu, where all the pottery we procured was unglazed. Several of the finest pieces I have seen were said to come from Na Sava, which is only a few miles from here; and I was the more anxious to see these people at work because of the tradition that their ancestresses first discovered the art. So Mr Jones sent word to the village chief that we proposed visiting his town in the afternoon. We walked up to Mr Shinnock's house; and he welcomed us to a real planter's bungalow, and gave us kid, *taro*, and tea, which we consumed in presence of a large circle of Fijian girls, who had assembled from other mountain-towns to see the pale-faced woman. *Na Maramma mbalavu*—the long lady—was the title by which I was invariably described.

The horses having, after much trouble, been caught and saddled, we rode round the back of the rock till we came to Na Sava, which is quite a large village. Here the chief called upon the potters to assemble on the village-green and exhibit their skill. Of course this was taking them rather at a disadvantage, but it enabled us to see a good deal in a short time.

The pottery is made entirely by hand—nothing of the nature of a wheel being known. The clay, having been mixed with fine sand, is rolled into long sausages, and these are coiled, one above the other, in a hollow circle, this forming the base of a round pot. Having partly moulded this into shape, the potter takes a smooth

round stone in her left hand, and holds it inside the clay, while with the other hand she beats the exterior with a flat piece of wood like a spoon, and constantly moistens the clay. Fresh sausages are then built up round the top, and gradually narrowed till there only remains room to insert one finger (if for a water-pot), or the food (if for a cooking-pot); and these are, in like manner, beaten to a smooth surface, both inside and out. The rim of the vessel must now be fashioned, and then comes a final wetting and smoothing of the whole, and probably a very elaborate geometrical pattern is, last of all, marked with a small sharp stick. Sometimes a pattern is laid on in raised work, almost like clusters of grapes. The work must be done ere the day wanes, as towards sunset the clay falls, and will not mould obediently to the potter's hand.

We stayed a couple of hours watching different women at work, and tried hard ourselves to model a peculiar vase with three cups on one stand, of which I had secured one unique specimen, without being able to ascertain where it was made. I am very anxious to procure others of the same pattern, which is singularly graceful; so the women are to try and make several for me.[1]

When the waning sun warned the potters to desist from working (and we found that the clay really did fall as fast as we attempted to model anything), we adjourned to the house of the village teacher to see his wife painting a very large and most beautiful piece of *tappa*. It was a heavy curtain, to which she was just putting the finishing touches. It was most artistic, and I coveted it exceedingly, and tried hard to bribe her to sell it to me. I have no doubt she coveted my dollars as much as I did her handiwork; but she dared not sell it, as it had already been annexed by the omnivorous Tui Mbua: so I had to content myself with watching her at work. She had designed an admirable and most intricate pattern, which she cut out on a heated banana-leaf, laid this on the cloth, and rubbed it over with a scrap of *masi*, dipped either in vegetable charcoal and water, or in red earth, liquefied with the sap of the candle-nut tree—*i.e.*, the silvery-leaved croton.

It is simply a form of stencilling, and only requires taste in arranging the patterns and colours, and a neat hand in executing them. But the result is handsome and artistic. And a great curtain of *tappa* hung across a native house is such a striking and

[1] We flattered ourselves that our description and illustration were fully understood; but evidently the design had originated in some other district; for when, a few weeks later, the specimens I had ordered were sent to Nasova, I received a dozen hideous articles of ponderous weight, utterly worthless. These people can only carry out their own ideas.

uncommon-looking kind of drapery, that it is certainly a matter of regret to know how surely this art is fated to die out before the influx of common English or American goods. In New Zealand, for instance, where it used to be made, it is now as wholly a thing of the past as the woad of our own ancestors. In Tonga, too, its use is greatly discouraged; and it is to be feared that future generations who visit Fiji may look for it as vainly as we now do for the wonderful hair-dressing which so amazed travellers in the last generation, but which was so intimately associated with ideas of war and cannibalism, that the Christians as a matter of course desisted from it.

Yet it was really carried to such perfection as to rank as a high art. Each great chief had his own hair-dresser, who sometimes devoted several hours a-day to his master's adornment, and displayed quite as much ingenuity in his designs as the potters or cloth-painters do in their work. The general aim was to produce a spherical mass about three feet in circumference; but a very successful hair-dresser has been known to bring this up to five feet! This mass was composed of twists or curls or tufts—oftenest of thousands of spiral curls, seven or eight inches long, shaped like a cone, with the base turned to the outside, and each individual hair turned inward. Others encouraged a tuft to grow so stiffly as to resemble a plume of feathers. Many had a bunch of "love-locks," small long curls hanging on one side; others a few long very fine plaits hanging from behind the ear, or from one temple; or half the head was curled and half frizzled: it was also dyed according to taste. And some dandies liked to have their heads party-coloured, black, sienna, and red; in short, there was no limit to the strange varieties thus produced—far more diverse than the most fanciful devices of any fashionable lady in Europe.

Now all this is a forgotten art, and though the gentlemen of our party who have returned from the war, saw a certain number of "big-heads," as the *tevoro—i.e.*, "devils," or rather devil-worshippers —are called, I have seen no trace of it except in a few monstrous wigs, which still occasionally appear in the dances. One of Lady Gordon's attendants, whose golden-brown hair is as soft and glossy as silk, retains one long tuft, which occasionally floats at liberty, at other times is plaited in a multitude of the finest braids, woven by the deft fingers of his love.

We rode back from Na Sava along the shore, and had to cross a muddy flat part of a mangrove-swamp, on which the horse of our friend slipped and rolled over; but no serious damage was done,

and we reached Philimone's house in safety ere darkness closed in. The great cliff, shrouded in gloom, stood out dark against the golden sky, and cast long reflections on the glassy sea, which at high tide is so lovely, but at the ebb leaves a wide expanse of mud, not altogether unpicturesque, but very aggravating when one has to cross about a quarter of a mile of it to reach one's boat. We had to do this both going and coming to Malaki, the potter's old home, and the wretched boatmen had full benefit both of my weight and my companion's

BALI BALI POLICE STATION,
October 12.

You see I really am in charge of the police!

After a very early breakfast this morning, I bade an affectionate farewell to Ratu Philimone and his kind wife Henrietta, and all their nice little brown children—such a pretty, well-behaved family group. Mr Jones brought the horses and saddled them, and then we rode over here, halting on the way to inspect a row of smallish stones, extending about two hundred yards. These were to represent the number of *bokola* (*i.e.*, human bodies) actually eaten by two chiefs, Wanga Levu and Undri Undri—one stone for each body!

Some one once suggested, as the very ideal of a hideous nightmare, that we should find ourselves face to face with a resurrection army, composed of every animal of whose flesh we have ever partaken—from the chicken-broth of our infancy, to the present day—sheep and oxen, calves and kids, red-deer and fallow-deer, rabbits and hares, geese, ducks, fowls, pheasants and partridges, grouse and woodcock, salmon and cod, herrings and trout, crabs and lobsters, and so on *ad infinitum*,—some men's nightmare including elephants and giraffes, whales and hippopotami, and other zoological curiosities, each rigidly demanding his pound of flesh. But what would such a dream as this be compared with the horror of a similar vision in which the plaintiffs were mighty men of valour, showing the broken skull on which a treacherous club alighted, and claiming, not a pound of flesh only, but their whole bodies!

For there were some of the more inveterate cannibals who allowed no man to share with them, and gloried in the multitude of men whom they had eaten, actually keeping a record of their number by erecting such lines of stones as those we saw here, which even now number 872, though at least 30 have been removed. Another member of the same family had registered 48, when his becoming a Christian compelled him to be satisfied with inferior meat!

These men were such noted cannibals that all *bokola* reserved for their special use were called by a Fijian word describing captured turtle, about to be deposited in the circular enclosures where they are kept till required—meaning that this capacious monster had room for all that came to him. His cannibal fork had also a distinctive name, descriptive of the enormous work done by so small a thing. In this country, where the precious imported whale's tooth is the only ivory known, and where formerly there existed no animal to yield bone, human shin-bones were greatly prized to make sail-needles; so this man's tribe must have been well provided! I do not think I have told you that at every cannibal feast there was served a certain vegetable,[1] which was considered as essential an adjunct to *bokola* as mint-sauce is to lamb, or sage to goose. Its use, however, was prudential, as human flesh was found to be highly indigestible, and this herb acted as a corrective. It was therefore commonly grown in every village, to be ready when required.

It is a pretty ride all the way from Na Vatu to Bali Bali, and we arrived here in time thoroughly to enjoy a second breakfast. The view from this point is a very unusual one, overlooking the salt-pans, which are artificially constructed shallow pools, in the midst of a wide stretch of dark mangrove-swamp. These are flooded at certain tides, and the evaporation yields a fair supply of salt. Half hidden in the mangrove is Na Vua Vua, the chief town of this district of Raki Raki, and in the distance lie the isles of Malaki and Nananu.

After a short rest we rode up a very beautiful valley to see a hill crowned with a grand mass of rocks—Vatu Damu—which, as we approached, resembled Cyclopean fortifications. We climbed the hill and found a pretty village nestled at the base of the great rocks, and shaddock-trees loaded with blossom, which perfumed the air. Then we rode to another grand rock, Kasia Lili. I made a sketch of each, and then returned here. My host has most kindly given up his house to me, and has found quarters for himself with his "offisas," as the people call the police.

October 13

Another day filled with impressions of beauty. Few bits of Scotland can compare with the mountain scenery of these isles. I only wish it were possible to make expeditions inland, and explore the dark ravines and corries which seam the great mountain-range

[1] *Solanum anthropophagorum.* It was also commonly used by the cannibal Maoris of New Zealand.

of the Kauvandra, along the base of which we have been riding all day.

I was out before daybreak, and went down the hill to have a near look at a true Kai Tholo house, which I had detected yesterday. The Kai Tholo, *i.e.*, mountain people, build totally different houses from those on the coast: they are like beehives, with a roof so high pitched as to suggest a tiny hive on the top of the first.

After breakfast we rode to the base of another grand rock-mass —Vatu Mami—where a little colony of planters received us most cordially, and welcomed us to a real planter's dinner, served in rough-and-ready style, but none the less acceptable, especially the invariable hot tea. Then we rode homeward, skirting the dark Kauvandra hills, and passing several villages more or less interesting from their situation. It was quite dark for the last hour, and we had several difficult creeks and gullies to cross, with banks rather like the side of a house; but the horses are so steady, and so perfectly used to this sort of ground, that they scrambled up and down like cats, and I had only to sit still and wonder what was going to happen next.

Finally, we got home all safe, and found that Harry Leefe had arrived to take me back to Nananu. He was feasting on roast goat—one which our friend Mr Shinnock had most kindly brought over and killed during our absence. So we had a capital supper, with true hunger sauce.

And now I may as well say good-night, as we start for Nananu at daybreak.

NANANU, *October* 21.

DEAR NELL,—You see I am still here, very much at home, and quite happy. I find one becomes greatly enamoured of this sort of life. The weather is perfect, and there is a wonderful charm in the little isles, where the sea meets one at every turn, and from which we see such lovely morning and evening lights. The mainland is just far enough to be glorified; and I delight in the wide horizon which encompasses us. Last Tuesday we were on the highest ground, overlooking isles and coral-reefs, which intersect the blue deep water with lines and patches of vivid green, marking the shallows as clearly as if they were drawn on a map. We made a fire and cooked our tea in a "billy."[1] Just as we had finished, H.M.S. Beagle hove in sight flying the Governor's flag; so we hurried back, and arrived in time to welcome him and Cap-

[1] Tin can.

tain Knollys. They were on their way to the camp at Nasauthoko, where Mr Le Hunte is now stationed; and they sailed the following morning.

I am delighted to tell you that Mr Leefe is planning another expedition for me to the main isle. It certainly is most kind of him to take so much trouble, for every arrangement here involves many difficulties; and leaving home, even for a day, is very inconvenient. Still I do long to see something of the beautiful coast of which we had such tantalising glimpses on our way here.

The first plan was, that we should go up by a small trading schooner which touched here yesterday, collecting produce; but at the last moment one of the precious Angora nannie-goats was found to be very ill, so Mr Leefe could not leave her. I regret to say she died this morning—a loss of £25, to say nothing of the value of her expected kid They are such pretty refined creatures, and so tame, that we are all quite sad about this.

NVUNINDAWA ON VITI LEVU, *October* 25

Well, we have started on our trip. Mr Eastgate kindly lent us his large police-boat, manned by a sergeant and four constables. It arrived on Monday morning; but the wind was so very stormy that we delayed our start till Tuesday, when, taking advantage of the high tide to clear the reefs, we came to this village, to meet a friend, who arrived so late that we could proceed no further. We found the chief, Ratu Ezikeli, and his wife, Andi Thithilia, in possession of the house of Caleb the teacher, while their own was being rethatched; but they most courteously insisted on giving it up to us.

When we unpacked the box of provisions so kindly prepared by Mrs Leefe, we found she had forgotten the non-essentials,—not one cup or plate, knife, fork, or spoon, was there All we could muster between us was my pocket-knife and Mr Leefe's small dirk. We sent a message to the chief to ask if he could lend us any cups. He sent us back the only article of foreign manufacture he possessed—which was the cover of a vegetable-dish! Mr Leefe adopted this as a drinking-vessel; I, being content with a smaller allowance, was provided with a cocoa-nut shell Some pieces of bamboo supplied spoons and egg-cups; and with ample store of fresh banana-leaves to act as plates, we fared exceedingly well.

Heavy rain came on at night, and our slumbers were much disturbed by the restlessness of the boatmen, who were, by way of

sleeping, in the house (which is of the usual pattern, only one room); but Fijians, as a rule, are notoriously restless, and these men have been going in and out all night. Now they are making up for it by a long sleep, which is to us an unattainable boon. The rain is pouring steadily, and I fear we have lost all the fine weather.

In the Church at Na Sau in Viti Levu,
October 26.

After all, the rain stopped quite suddenly, and we had a most lovely day of bright sunshine and beautiful colouring—every distant isle wonderfully distinct; in short, just that "clear shining after rain" which the old Hebrew poets so fully appreciated.

We sailed at once, and reached Va Via about noon. This is one of the places I most wished to see. It is a lovely village close to the sea, built on white sand, and overshadowed by great *ndelo* trees, with tufts of rosy tassels constantly dripping showers of pink stamens on all around. High dark cliffs enclose this little bay, casting a cool deep shadow during the morning and evening hours. To appreciate the delight of this, you must realise the heat of a tropical sun. One family there live in a cave with only a front fence of wattle and leaves. We found the house of Phineas, the village teacher, open, though the family was absent; so we ventured to borrow his kettle and were enjoying our tea under the dark trees, when his young wife returned and welcomed us gracefully. Leaving Mr Leefe to do the civilities, I walked up to the ridge which separates beautiful Va Via from this village. From this point the coast-view, looking either way, is simply exquisite—especially as seen in the radiant evening light. I secured one sketch last night, and another this morning; and when you see them, I know you will want to come to these lovely isles.

When Mr Leefe rejoined me, we walked down to this village —the boat having already gone round to announce our approach. We were at once taken to the house of a most horrid-looking old chief. It was so stuffy, and so full of people, that we voted it quite unendurable, and adjourned to the church, too thankful to know that in so doing we shocked no prejudice of the people. It was cool and pleasant, and near the sea; and in its stillness we slept as only the weary can, making up for the previous night's unrest.

At sunrise I returned to the ridge and worked steadily till

2 P.M.—breakfast being brought to me. When I came down I found Ratu Ezikeli[1] and Mr Jones, who had arrived by canoe. The latter accompanied us on a scramble up the bed of a very rocky stream, which was unusually picturesque, from the fact of a very remarkable series of waterfalls issuing from under huge boulders: it was suggestive of weird German fairy-tales and bottomless caverns. At last we reached a table-land of *taro* fields on a very high level; there I found a woman bathing in a most delicious pool, so I halted and joined her—the gentlemen finding an equally fascinating bath further on. It was *vinaka sara*—that is to say, "very good," as you may well understand.

Refreshed and invigorated, we continued our wanderings till we came to a small village perched on the very face of a cliff—a dizzy site. A woman who had carried a heavy burden from the shore up to this point, now turned along the path that led round the cliff to her house,—a track so precipitous, that albeit not troubled with nerves, I did not care to face it. We sat awhile at the village overlooking a sea-view of exceeding beauty. While we lingered there, a native climbed up in hot haste to tell Mr Jones that the large canoe on which he had shipped all his household goods to transfer them to his new quarters, had been swamped on a reef,—a pleasant piece of news, which we thought might safely have been delayed till our descent.

Returning to the village, where the rocky stream widens as it enters the sea, we crossed it in a minute cockle-shell, the smallest boat I ever saw in use. It had recently been washed ashore, and a tiny brown urchin was in possession of it, and ferried us across, one by one. The last thing washed up by the sea was a good waterproof cloak, blown off some vessel.

One of the constables made a stew of salt goat and *taro* for our supper, to which the gentlemen added very good scones of flour and sweet-potato. So we fared sumptuously; and now I am going to creep into my tent, which is in a corner of the church, so I hope for a peaceful, undisturbed night.

KORO TIKO, IN VITI LEVU BAY,
October 27.

This time we really are gipsying. I must just write a few lines by combined lantern and moonlight.

[1] This fine chief died suddenly during the great meeting of chiefs at Bau in January 1880.

We left the quiet church of Na Sau very early this morning. A three hours' sail of dreamlike loveliness brought us to Viti Levu Bay, which is a blue sea lake, embosomed in great hills; its shores are richly wooded in parts, but there is some flat ground where good crops of maize are raised, and here and there, are strangely conical hills and broken crags, on which villages nestle in most inaccessible places.

First I climbed one hill, and secured a careful sketch of the bay and the principal crag, while Mr Leefe went to call on a neighbouring planter, an Ayrshire man, who made some money at the diggings, and then settled here. Afterwards he took me there, and we were cordially welcomed and urged to stay; but I need hardly tell you that in fine weather I prefer any sort of camping out to a semi-European house of this description, surrounded by swarms of foreign labour. So I contented myself with admiring the wealth of golden maize laid out to dry in the open courtyard before the house; and then, having obtained leave to camp in a corn-shed beside the bay, where we had left our boat, we returned here.

I greatly fear that our landlord is rather hurt at my preferring the corn-store beside the sea to his rough bachelor quarters inland, but I must hope he will forgive me. The building in question is the only one in this part of the bay, and is just a rough wooden shed, in which our friend stores his corn ready for shipping. The boatmen soon heaped up these sacks so as to leave us each a clear corner, and one for themselves. In one of these I hung up my tent as usual—*i.e.*, my mosquito-net, with a curtain of black waterproof for a door. It is just like the little tents we used to make when we were children, and played at being gipsies.

Having thus prepared our night quarters, we rowed across the bay to Koro Viti Levu (*koro* means town), and here we found three tiny villages of small houses, quaintly perched in every available crevice of the rock, and on the summit of a great crag. There are always either a few plants of large-leaved banana, tobacco, or sugar-cane—or maybe a flowering shaddock, lemon, or hybiscus, with tufts of scarlet or yellow blossom to lend grace to these rock-nests, to say nothing of the interest of their brown inhabitants, who peep curiously at us as we approach.

I stopped to sketch at the mouth of the Roko Roko river, then we walked to the summit of the crag, and across the promontory till we came to a cave where we found about a dozen very slightly clad women making great cooking-pots, more than two feet deep (some nearer three feet deep), and from twenty to thirty inches in

diameter. It was a very striking scene, as we passed from the glare of the sunlight and of the glittering blue sea below us, and turned into this dark workshop. We remained for some time watching the women at work, while they chattered to the boatmen (the constables), doubtless glad of our visit to break the monotony of the day. It was wonderful to see with what skill they modelled such very large pots, simply by eye—attaining perfect symmetry, without a wheel or any other mechanical aid.

In the cool of the evening we rowed back here, and the men prepared our supper, at which the grand centre dish was part of the leg of a young pig, which we found had been sent on board yesterday by a considerate young planter. While they were so occupied, I went along the shore till I found a good bathing-spot, where the roots of a great *mbaka* tree had fashioned themselves into a screen, making an admirable dressing-room—so I had a delightful bathe by moonlight.

Now the mosquitoes are becoming so troublesome that I shall be happier under my net in the corn-shed, though I quite grudge wasting this soft lovely moonlight. How the boatmen, who of course have no nets, can endure the mosquitoes, is to me a mystery.

NANANU, *Sunday* 29.

We are back once more, you see, and enjoying the peace of a calm, quiet day. The stillness here is wonderful and pleasant. How I do hate all noise!

We found that many fellow-creatures had also arranged to spend the night in the corn-shed. A multitude of rats had been attracted by the maize, and held high revel. Happily, however, they only disported themselves under the raised wattle-floor on which we and the corn-sacks rested; and for my own part, I know I was too weary to mind them, and soon slept in peace.

At sunrise we climbed to the summit of the great crag beneath whose shadow we lay. It was a steep ascent, but a succession of beauties of vegetation and scenery helped us up. Near the top we found two villages, one of which was well fortified, in addition to holding a natural position of great strength. Only three years ago there was severe fighting here between two tribes, which resulted in a massacre of about 450 people, most of whom were eaten! Now the last possibility of disturbance is over, we believe, for ever; and a lady may wander over these hills alone, in perfect security.

At the tiny rock village on the upper crag, the people pointed out a huge grave into which, they said, that last year, in the great sickness (meaning the measles), they began by throwing in their dead uncounted. After a while they did begin to keep count, and from that time till the plague subsided, seventy bodies were laid in that one pit.

We descended the hill by another path, very pretty but overgrown; and we had to force our way through tall reeds, ginger, and turmeric plants, which was hot and exhausting.

In the afternoon we started on our return cruise, and four hours of alternate stiff rowing and sailing brought us back here last night.

November 1, Sunrise.

Yesterday evening Sir Arthur arrived here in the sixteen-oar barge on his return from the war district, where he has had final arrangements to make. Now it is to be hoped that the last spark of danger has been stamped out. Mr Le Hunte, having finished his work there, returns with Sir Arthur, leaving Captain Knollys for the present at the camp. They return to Nasova this morning, so I will send my letter to catch the mail. Good-bye.

NASOVA, *November* 13.

About three days after I last wrote to you, the little island-steamboat suddenly arrived, and an hour later I had bidden adieu to Nananu and to the kind friends who call it home. For a few hours we lay off Viti Levu bay to take in those identical corn-sacks with which we had become so intimately acquainted! The following morning I arrived here, found Lady Gordon and the children well, and everything about the place continuing to become cosier and more home-like month by month. How it was improved since we first arrived! The household pets have received several additions — namely, some young Kai Tholos, orphaned by the war.

Yesterday a fine young chief, Ratu Taivita (that is, David), who was with Captain Knollys in the mountains, and has ever since been very ill from the hardships which he there endured, died. He was very popular, and his death is much mourned. It was decided that he should have a military funeral, as he was an officer in the native police, and that his companions in arms should assemble in force to pay him the last tokens of respect. He was

buried this morning. I went to the funeral with Captain Olivé and the Baron. We assembled at his father's house; and it was a fine striking and touching picture that we there saw. Taivita was a fine handsome fellow, and he looked grand in death, lying on his mats, with dark native cloth thrown over him, and his mass of tawny silky hair thrown back almost on the lap of his sister, who sat on the mats at his head. The old chief, his father, sat at his feet, as one crushed with sorrow. Thakombau's sons, Ratu Abel, Timothy, and Joe, with another very high chief, Ratu Johnny, were the pall-bearers; and the old Vuni Valu followed up the steep path which leads to the cemetery, where already so many have found a quiet resting-place beneath the tall palms and waving grasses. The grave was found to be too shallow, and all had to stand for an hour in the burning sun while it was deepened—a trying hour for both the father and the old Vuni Valu.

There is a chance of sending letters to New Zealand, so I may as well despatch this.

NASOVA, *December* 22.

DEAR EISA,—There has been nothing special to tell you for a good while. Our principal events have been attending a concert in Levuka, given in aid of the hospital, and a dance given by the Engineer officers, in the old house formerly occupied by the Layards, and now by themselves. Happily, being on the sea-level, we were able to go and return by boat. Now we are much occupied with our approaching trip to New Zealand. Little Nevil has had a very severe attack of influenza, followed by fever. So Dr Macgregor has positively decided that the children must not spend another hot season here; and we are to start immediately for Khandavu, our outermost isle, which lies far to the south, and where the three Pacific mail-steamers continue to call every month, and tranship their passengers for San Francisco, New Zealand, and Australia, although under protest. So they have kept us on tenter-hooks for a year already, expecting that each month would be their last call—a very inconvenient condition. Even now, though the mail is due on Christmas Day, no one is sure that she will call, in which case we are to go all the way to New Zealand in the very uncomfortable little island-steamer, Star of the South. One thing to which we look forward with positive delight, is the prospect of once more seeing carriages and horses, and being able to enjoy comfortable drives. Do you realise that for more than a year we have

not heard the sound of wheels![1] I believe the Engineers have imported a few wheelbarrows, which the Fijians at first carried about with great care. These are the only wheeled vehicles in the group. As to telegraphy, we have a sort of dim recollection that something of the sort exists, but it will be many a long day before its imperative messages reach us here.

CHAPTER XXIII.

START FOR NEW ZEALAND—EXTINCT VOLCANOES—SIR GEORGE GREY'S TREASURES—TREE-KANGAROOS.

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND,
Sunday Night, December 31, 1876.

All best greetings to you, one and all. We arrived yesterday in New Zealand, and it is now 10 P.M. on New Year's Eve. We had to leave Nasova on Christmas Eve (Sunday), but not till the afternoon; so we had the pleasure of seeing our poor little church all transformed, by the help of great tree-ferns and palm-fronds, and a moderate amount of red cloth—simple but very effective decoration. The palm-fronds especially are invaluable, as one on each side of an arched window does all that is required.

After luncheon we embarked — our party consisting of Lady Gordon, Jack and Nevil, Mrs Abbey and the Portuguese nurse, Mr Maudslay, and myself. The cabin was such an uncomfortable little hole that only the children were condemned to sleep there, while we preferred remaining on deck, notwithstanding some rain-squalls. We reached Khandavu on Christmas morning, and found a very fine large American steamer, the City of Sydney, waiting for the arrival of the mail from San Francisco, which was to give her the New Zealand passengers, and go on to Australia. Our little steamer did seem like a pigmy as we ran alongside of the

[1] Wheels are no longer unknown in Levuka. A passable road having at length been constructed along the beach, a covered cab now plies to and fro between the furthest point of the settlement and the Government offices at Nasova, a distance of nearly two miles, carrying passengers at 6d. a-head. Among further symptoms of progress in 1880, I note the opening of a hotel on the upper Rewa River, and another in Tavinni; also the establishment of regular steam communication all over the group, as also with Tonga, New Zealand, and Sydney.

great mail-steamer, with her clear deck, allowing an unbroken walk of about 300 feet.

We went on board at once, and the jovial old half-caste stewardess told us that on the last trip they carried 250 cabin passengers, besides an immense menagerie. We somewhat dreaded the probability of so huge an influx, and anxiously awaited the arrival of the San Francisco mail. She came, and a few moments later up went the yellow flag. Dr Mayo had found a case of suspected smallpox, so of course quarantined her at once. After the frightful scourge of measles, brought on by allowing one infected Fijian to land, you can quite understand that quarantine regulations are strict. Great was the excitement and discussion. The Australia wanted to give us all the New Zealand passengers, but our captain happily stood firm, proving that such a course would result in both ships being quarantined, and none available for the mail-service next month. So it was decided that both should go to Auckland. Our great ship was literally empty, and consequently very dull. We sailed at the same moment as the Australia, and though far apart, kept alongside of one another the whole way, and never saw another sail.

Yesterday at dawn we neared Auckland, and the Australia slipped quietly into quarantine harbour, the poor fellow who was ill having settled all doubts by dying the previous day. He was buried at sea. Two fresh cases have also appeared. It is very trying for all the passengers, whose families are here, expecting them for the New Year. Meanwhile we came calmly to our anchorage; but as no one in Auckland seemed capable of realising that two steamers had arrived, and that we were not also in quarantine, no friends came to meet us; so we found our way to the principal hotel, which is not much to boast of, and is at present crowded for the races. However, the landlady managed to stow us away in a series of pigeon-holes, and I then found my way to the post-office, where I was assured there were no letters for any of us, but, after much perseverance, succeeded in extracting an enormous budget, including twelve home letters for myself, which kept me busy all the rest of the day.

Our first impressions of Auckland are not imposing. It is a town of moderate size, now in a transition state from the wooden-house period to the brick era. What chiefly strikes me is, that even at this time of the races it is so quiet and orderly, scarcely a symptom of drink, and every one looks so comfortable and so tidily dressed.

As yet I have seen no one who looks poor. Yet, on the other hand, we see no symptoms of wealth, such as met us at every turn in Sydney. But then, I fancy, all the rich people live down in the southern provinces, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, which, I fear, we shall not be able to visit. From what we hear of financial difficulties in these parts, we are beginning to think that our poor little Fiji is, after all, not so exceptionally pauperish. Imagine this young colony having already contracted a national debt of upwards of twenty millions! But she follows the example of her mother, and bears the burden very cheerfully.

To-day, being Sunday, I have been at two English churches, each having surpliced choir and bright Christmas decorations. This morning just in front of me sat a body of native police, Maoris. They are fine strapping fellows, like very good specimens of Englishmen, only a shade darker; but their captain, a very handsome man, is richly tattooed on both cheeks with dark-blue lines, like moustaches. They are the first coloured race I have seen who can assume the broadcloth of civilisation without being thereby hopelessly vulgarised. I am also much struck by the beauty of the Anglo-Maori half-castes, all previous experience in other lands having led me in a great measure to sympathise with the aversion commonly felt towards mixed races, who so often unite the worst characteristics of both. Here this rule seems to be reversed, and I am told that the mixed race is as superior intellectually as it is physically.

At this season there are a large number of Maoris in town, attracted by the annual gifts so freely dispensed by the English Government. All the men are picturesque, and enliven their civilised costume by some touch of bright colours: a brilliant scarf, thrown round the hat or the shoulders, lends something of Spanish grace to the wearer. But hats trimmed with loads of commonest artificial flowers do not look in keeping with the shock of unkempt hair overhanging the great dark eyes, and long green-stone ear-rings of the girls, whose lips and chins are disfigured by curves of dark-blue tattooing. Many of them wear bright tartan shawls; and all seem sensitive to cold, for they are much wrapped up, even on these hot midsummer days.

I have been amused at watching the meeting of several parties of friends. Their form of salutation is neither kissing, as in Europe, nor smelling one another, as in Fiji, but they press their noses together, which to our unaccustomed eye looks truly absurd.

New Year's Morning, 1877

I had written so far when my candle went out, so I sat in the dark listening to a real piper in the distance playing "The Campbells are Coming." Then the clock struck midnight, and the Volunteer band marched down the street playing cheerily; and many bursts of anything but music arose on every side, proving the lungs of the people to be in exceedingly good condition.

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, HOBSON STREET,
January 8.

We moved into these lodgings as soon as possible, and have had some pleasant drives and walks. Auckland lies, as it were, in a cluster of extinct volcanoes. The largest and most perfect specimen is Rangitoto—a great triple cone rising from a base of black lava, very rough and uninviting. The principal crater, near the town, is now known as Mount Eden, and its steep grassy slopes are dotted with pleasant English houses. On its summit there are still traces of the old Maori fortification, in artificially levelled terraces, surrounding the deep crater, in which a whole tribe might lie concealed in case of attack. I sat on the edge of the crater, and sketched the town looking towards three volcanoes. The country all round is dotted with these, but most of them are insignificant little hills. Of course they give great interest to the town, but it is not pretty, though the harbour is pleasant. It reminds me of some towns in the south of England, with the addition of a good land-locked harbour. All the beauty lies further south. The primeval forest which formerly clothed this now barren land has wholly disappeared. What the woodman's axe spared has been swept away by ruthless burning.

To-day we are going to stay with Sir George Grey on his island-home at Kawau. Mr Whittaker, who is now Prime Minister, has offered Lady Gordon the beautiful Government steamer Hinemoa, to take us there. On our way we are to call at the Wai Wera hot springs, which are much celebrated as a cure for rheumatism and other ailments. But though they lie in a pretty bay, the waters themselves have been imprisoned in baths; and a large hotel is built close by to accommodate a hundred patients.

I am told, however, that there are some marvellously beautiful geysers and terraces of natural baths somewhere in the Maori country, not very far from here. I have not yet met any one who

has seen them; for, as you know, people never do go to see things near home, but I hope to find my way there ere long.

ISLE OF KAWAU, TWENTY MILES FROM AUCKLAND
January 9.

Yesterday morning Mr Whittaker came to escort us on board the Hinemoa, which brought us here in great comfort, to receive the most cordial of welcomes from kind Sir George Grey. I suppose you remember that he was Governor here many years ago, and proved himself the stanch friend, both of the Maoris and of the white settlers; then he was made Governor of the Cape of Good Hope (where he arrived just after Roualeyn returned from his lion-hunting).

After this he was a second time appointed Governor of New Zealand. And so dearly does he love both the country and the people, that, when his term of office had expired, he bought this charming island, built a regular English house, and devoted himself to making it a little Paradise—an effort in which nature readily seconds him, so kindly does this good foster-mother (New Zealand) adopt every living thing, animal or vegetable, that is brought to her care.

So palms and pines of many sorts here grow side by side, with all kinds of indigenous hard wood; hops and vines festoon orange-trees, while mulberries and loquats, apples, quinces, pears, and strawberries, all flourish. Peaches, apricots, and figs grow into luxuriant thickets wherever they are once planted, and bear fruit abundantly. Flowers are equally luxuriant,—and one tithe of the care bestowed on a garden in Fiji is here rewarded by a glow of blossom: sweet-peas, jessamine, mignonette, and many other wellnigh forgotten delights, make the whole air fragrant.

The house stands at the head of a lovely little bay, and only a green lawn and a belt of tall flowering aloes intervene between it and the shore. This bay, like all the shores of the isle, is fringed with large trees, called by the Maoris Pohutakawa—*i.e.*, the brine-sprinkled—because it loves to outstretch its wide boughs over the salt sea; but the English settlers call it the Christmas-tree,[1] because it invariably blossoms at Christmas-time, and boughs of its scarlet flowers take the place of holly in church-decoration. When in its prime, each tree is one mass of glowing scarlet; and the effect of its flame-coloured branches overhanging the bright blue

[1] *Metrosideros tomentosa.*

water, and dripping showers of fiery stamens in the sea or on the grass, is positively dazzling. Already the first burst of colour is passing off, but enough remains to give marvellous beauty to the shores.

The house is like a cosy old English home—every room wood-panelled, and full of strange treasures from many lands. Good old engravings and pictures; wonderful specimens of old Maori carving; weapons and robes of all sorts, including rare feather-cloaks; precious objects from the Summer Palace, including a jade-tablet, which was a page in the Emperor of China's genealogy; priceless ancient gold jewels from Mexico; the stone-axe of the greatest monarch of the Sandwich Isles; and, strangest of all, some beautiful old china, which for the last two centuries has lain at the bottom of the sea, and has now been rescued from a vessel which was sunk off the Cape two hundred years ago. In the delightful library of carefully selected and valuable works are many old manuscripts of the greatest interest, including about fifteen bound volumes in Arabic character, but written in some dialect of Central Africa which is as yet unknown. These are an Ancient African history. Sir George knew of its existence, and advertised for it when he was Governor of the Cape. Many years afterwards, a case containing the volumes was brought to him by a man-of-war, whose captain stated that a fine old Arab gentleman at Zanzibar had brought it on board, and made him understand that it contained manuscripts which he had succeeded in rescuing from the interior. Only think what strange historical mysteries may one day be solved, when some Arabic scholar shall take to dialect-hunting in Central Africa, and return competent to read these now sealed books!

The children are in Paradise, racing about and finding pets of every sort, all at large,—gold and silver pheasants, and multitudes of common ones. As to skylarks, the whole air seems musical with their lovely warble. I can hardly realise that they, like the too abundant thistles on the mainland, are all imported from Scotland. Last night we strolled up to the dairy—a nice clean English dairy. The path lay over swelling pasture-land—just like Sussex downs—with sheep and cattle feeding. After so long a spell in Fiji, where grass generally means tall reeds, meeting far above your head, the mere fact of walking over short meadow-grass is charming; and then to sit on it, watching the sun set over the sea, and listening to the

"Busy crowd
Of larks in purest air."

carried me right back to Gordonstown, and our own green hills overlooking the Moray Firth. This is the purest air you can imagine. It is just warm enough to be pleasant, and slightly bracing, but not too sudden a change from the tropics.

I have just come in from an exquisite walk with our kind host. He does love this island, which he has beautified with so much care, and has been showing me all manner of interesting things. Amongst others, in a quiet glade of most carefully preserved native bush, we saw a large number of lovely little tree-kangaroos, of which Sir George imported the first pair from New Guinea, and which have already multiplied exceedingly. They are small animals, as beautiful as they are rare, with the richest brown fur, and when feeding in the grassy glades you would naturally mistake them for hares; but at the faintest sound they sit upright, and standing on their long hind-legs, they bound away with a succession of leaps, and reappear springing from bough to bough, and peering cautiously from among the dark foliage.

Besides these squirrel-like beauties, there are large numbers of common kangaroos, or wallabies, as they are commonly called; and herds of Indian elk, fallow deer, and even red deer, roam at large. Mr Maudslay looks forward to some pleasant days of pheasant-shooting, and also in pursuit of wild cattle and wild pigs. As to the wallabies, they are almost beneath the dignity of a true sportsman—so very deliberate is their strange leaping retreat, and so frequently do they pause to gaze wistfully at him. I believe that even these are imported animals, and that New Zealand, like Fiji, possessed literally no indigenous quadrupeds except a small rat. There are some specimens of the wingless birds still living on this isle as in a haven of refuge; and amongst the house treasures, there is a skeleton of the great extinct moa, which is like a gigantic ostrich.

January 12.

To-day we have had quite a novel excitement. A large party of Maoris arrived in half-a-dozen good English boats. They were fishing for sharks—not the common shark, though it also haunts these seas, but a small kind, rarely exceeding six feet in length, which they dry for winter food. As all the Maoris come here on the most friendly terms, Mr George (married to Sir George Grey's niece) took Jack, Nevil, and myself on board their biggest boat. They had already caught upwards of fifty, which were thrown into the hold, and we saw ten more, caught with bait. When hauled

in, the sharks receive a violent blow on the nose, which apparently kills them at once. In some seasons the Maoris catch as many as 15,000 off this island, and they take them to a small isle in the neighbourhood where they hang them up to dry; you can imagine how fragrant the atmosphere becomes! Mr George tells me he has seen a wall three hundred feet long, and at least six feet high, of this unsavoury winter store.

Of course to me this glimpse of true Maori life has been most interesting. Afterwards the fishers came to see Sir George, for whom they have a great affection and respect, and with good cause. His knowledge of their language is said to be quite perfect. He has collected a great number of their old songs and legends, and published them; and now a sect called Hau-Hau, who have thrown off their early faith in Christianity, and made up an amalgamated religion for themselves, read this book in their churches as being the Maori Bible, and more edifying to them than the legends of Syria.

It is so strange to hear Sir George tell of all the changes he has seen here since the days when he selected the sites of the settlements, each of which is now a great city—Christchurch for the English Church party, and Dunedin for the Scots. When he first knew the latter it was the home of one old sailor. Later he visited the place and found a flourishing village. After fifteen years, when he returned from the Cape of Good Hope, about 7000 people came out several miles to meet him, and took him by a back way to the great town hall, built on the site where first he had pitched his tent; then they led him to the front, where he was received by upwards of a thousand well-dressed ladies.

In an Old Maori Pah, Kawau,
Sunday, Jan 28, 1877.

Dearest Eisa,—The day is so lovely that I have brought my writing up to this pleasant old fort, and am sitting on the grassy top of a yellow sandstone cliff which rises sheer from a sea so clear that, as I look over the precipices, I can see the white-breasted cormorants (the *kawau*) dive for fish, and swim after them under water for ever so far. The only symptom of fighting which remains on this peaceful spot is a deep ditch which runs round the land side; but every marked headland hereabouts has been a *pah* or fort, where in old days tattooed warriors fought to the death. Those on this island were noted pirates, and at last all the neighbouring tribes

united to destroy them. It is peaceful enough now, but matters are by no means over secure on the mainland.[1]

The state of things existing in this country is most extraordinary. Imagine that, within twenty miles of Auckland, there is a vast tract of land on which no white man dare set foot. Only outlaws, murderers, and suchlike, are there allowed to take refuge, and justice cannot touch them. Sometimes out of respect to Sir George, they will give a personal friend of his permission to travel through the country; but when he sent Mr Maudslay up last week, they turned him back.

A number of them come here to consult Sir George upon various matters. Most of them are very fine men; and what particularly strikes us is seeing how well they look in comfortable woollen suits. I believe the Maoris always did wear plenty of clothes—at least large blankets, beautifully made either of flax or *kiwi* feathers. When Mr Maudslay was in their country last week, he showed them a number of Fijian photographs, at which they looked with keen interest; but were much shocked by the undress of the girls, which, they remarked, was even worse than that of the ladies at the Government House balls!

The climate here is delicious: each day is like a very lovely

[1] During ten years of travel among brown and yellow races of every hue, continually spending long days alone with my paint-box in most wild and remote places, I have always done so fearlessly, being convinced that among these people a white woman leads a charmed life. While revising these pages I have received awful proof to the contrary from the following paragraph in the 'Times:'—

"An English Lady Murdered in New Zealand.—New Zealand newspapers to hand by the last mail contain details of the murder of Miss Mary Beatrice Dobie, daughter of the late Major H. M. Dobie, of the Madras Army, by a Maori at Taranaki, New Zealand, on the 25th of November. Miss Dobie, who was twenty-six years of age, formerly resided at Irthington, Cumberland, with her mother and sisters. At the time of the murder she was staying with her brother-in-law, Major Goring, and her mother. On the afternoon of the 25th of November, Miss Dobie had gone out for a walk towards Te Ngamu, and as she did not return a search-party was organised, and bonfires were lighted along the coast-line. The body was found forty yards off the main road. The throat was cut from ear to ear, and life was extinct. Near the body was a bunch of wild-flowers, evidently gathered by the deceased. The ground showed traces of a desperate struggle, and the flax-bushes were bespattered with blood. The spot is a very lonely one, about a hundred yards from an uninhabited house at Te Ngamu. An inquest was held, at which evidence was given implicating a Maori named Tuhi, who subsequently confessed to the crime. Miss Dobie, who was well known in Auckland, had gone to the place where she lost her life for the purpose of sketching Ngamu Bay. She was an ardent admirer of New Zealand scenery, and many of her sketches have appeared in the 'Graphic.'"

This sad story comes home to me the more vividly as this attractive and accomplished lady visited Fiji with an elder sister shortly after my departure. They were for some time guests of Sir Arthur Gordon at Nasova, whence they made expeditions to many parts of the group, and afterwards proceeded to New Zealand to join their relations.

English summer, or like our coolest days in Fiji. Indeed our life here is much the same as if we were living on one of the Fijian isles,—just as isolated and self-contained.

Only once a-week does a steamer call with the mails, and great is the excitement it occasions. All the families living on the island (numbering about six, gardener, carpenter, shepherds, and labourers) assemble on the beach with all their babies. The six house-maidens, three of whom are the daughters of one of the resident families, also turn out. They wear neat cotton dresses, and large straw-hats, trimmed with white muslin and black velvet; and very nice and simple they look. Sir George extends to all his people the same genial cordiality and genuine kindness by which he makes us feel so thoroughly at home here. His one wish is that all should enjoy this little paradise of peace and beauty as much as he does himself. So every girl in the house is allowed two hours' walk every afternoon, and the whole of Sunday afternoon; and once a-week they have a dance, to which they invite the few swains within reach, and have a very lively evening. Most of their fathers own a bit of land somewhere, and they will probably marry small landowners.

Such a sad thing happened quite lately on the mainland just opposite here. A young man had just received his bride elect from her parents, and the two started alone to ride to Auckland (distant about twenty-five miles), there to get married. In the dusk he struck a match to light his pipe. His horse reared, threw him down a bank, and he was killed instantly. The wretched girl had to ride on alone till she reached a house, where she found people, who returned with her to rescue his body. Certainly the dwellers in thinly-peopled districts have to face many a rough bit on their path through life.

As to ourselves, life goes on very peacefully, and very pleasantly. We explore all the lovely bays and the little valleys and headlands, and admire the care with which every natural advantage has been preserved and fresh beauties added. Certainly this is a paradise for acclimatisation; and in a very few years it will be hard to guess what is indigenous and what imported. There are pines and cypresses from every corner of the globe; Australian gums; silver-leaved trees from the Cape; and all manner of fruit-bearing trees, planted for the enjoyment of all alike. And these mingle freely with all forms of hardwood peculiar to New Zealand, notably the stately *kauri* pine (*Dammara australis*), which is peculiar to the province of Auckland, and very similar to the *ndakua* pine of Fiji; and neither of them would at the first glance be recognised by the

unlearned to be pines at all, their foliage being small oblong leaves, and their cones insignificant; their stem is perfectly upright. There is an indigenous palm here, called the *nikau*, a species of areka; and the green dracæna (*Cordyline australis*) flourishes on all moist soil. The settlers call it the cabbage-tree, though its cluster of long handsome leaves crowning a tall stem is nowise suggestive of that familiar vegetable. The Maoris call it the *ti* tree—by which name the whites, in common with the Australian blacks, call a scrubby shrub, somewhat resembling juniper or gigantic heather, which to the Maoris is known as *manakau*. Its foliage consists of tiny needles, while its delicate white blossoms resemble myrtle. It grows in dense thickets, and spreads so rapidly as to cause endless trouble to the settler who endeavours to convert the hillsides into such pleasant slopes of English grass as those which here appear so perfectly natural, that I could at first hardly believe them to be the result of patient toil.

Just below the headland where I am now sitting, there are tufts of handsome green flags. This is the precious New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*). Its handsome stalk of red blossom (fully ten feet high) is a special attraction to the bees; and great are the treasures of wild honey to be dug out of the banks, by wily hunters. The long leaves of this flax are nature's ready-made cords and straps, so strong is the fibre, and so readily do the leaves split into the narrowest strips. At the base of each leaf there is a coating of strong gum, which, I believe, is the chief difficulty in employing machinery in the manufacture of this flax, so as to render it a profitable article of commerce.

As to tree-ferns of many kinds, their luxuriance is not to be surpassed. In some deep shady places I have seen them growing stems fully thirty feet high; while other green gullies are wholly overshadowed by great fronds which on the under side gleam like silver. Imagine the delight of losing yourself in such a dream of loveliness, and perhaps coming suddenly on a thicket of figs or peaches, loaded with ripe fruit! Then wandering homeward through the meadows, by the course of a sparkling brooklet, and gathering mushrooms and water-cresses in abundance, while overhead the larks are singing in chorus.

Another luxury is the abundance of oysters. The island has a coast-line of about thirty miles, along which lie a succession of oyster-beds. Not content with covering the rocks, they grow on the lower branches of the beautiful "brine-sprinkled" *pohutukawa* trees, which literally dip into the sea. And so we sit beneath their

shadow and knock the oysters off with a sharp stone, and have feasts which any epicure might envy; for the oysters are of excellent flavour. I own that at first I did feel considerable repugnance to this method of eating my-fellow-creatures (which certainly seemed near akin to the Fijian taste for eating various small fish alive); but having once been induced to try it, I plead guilty to being now foremost at every oyster picnic, being fully satisfied that the interesting mollusc must be devoid of nerves, and of all consciousness of the pleasures of existence!

February 13.

I must tell you about a wonderful effect of phosphorescence which I have seen on the last two nights while looking down from my window to the lovely little bay. On Sunday the 11th there had been violent thunderstorms, with vivid lightning and downpours of rain, leaden skies, and a bright-green sea. So heavy were the rain-storms that the whole bay was discoloured by the red mud washed down by the streamlets—a strange contrast to its usually faultless crystalline green. I chanced to look out about 11 P.M., and saw the whole bay glowing with pale white light; and fiery wavelets rippled right up beneath the trees and round the rocks, which stood out sharp and black. The effect was of a sea of living light, and as I beheld it, framed by dark trees, with tall flowering aloes cutting black against the dazzling light, it was a weird and wonderful scene. For about ten minutes I watched it entranced, then it slowly faded away, and the scene was changed to dense obscurity. Last night I looked out at the same hour, and saw nothing but darkness, but about midnight I was awakened by a deafening crash of thunder, followed by heavy rain. I guessed this would stir up whatever creatures caused the strange pallid light. Perhaps they are disturbed by the rain-drops, or perhaps they receive a small electric shock which starts them all dancing. Whatever be the cause, the result proved as I expected. Ere I could reach the window, the bay was illuminated by tiny ripples of fire, which gradually increased in size and number till all was one blaze of glowing dazzling light. This lasted for about five minutes, and then died completely away.

March 4.

The Fiji mail has brought us most sad news—namely, the death from dysentery of Mrs Macgregor, the last remaining of our original sisterhood. I was with her the very day we left Levuka, and

within six weeks she had passed away, leaving one wee lassie, little Nell, about three years old, also an older boy in Scotland. It seems such a little while since we watched Mrs de Ricci pass away from the same dread illness. And now we hear that Mr Eyre is very ill at Nasova, and that he must be sent here on sick-leave as soon as he can be moved. Colonel Pratt was invalided some time ago, and has been for some weeks in Auckland. Sir George invited him to come here, and we expected him by several successive steamers, but each time he was too ill to come; once he fainted twice in one day. Certainly he ought not to risk returning to Fiji. It seems too foolish—and poor Mrs Macgregor's death is a terrible warning of how little resistance to dysentery can be made by a constitution when once enfeebled by the climate, and Colonel Pratt has long felt it to be trying and exhausting.[1]

CHAPTER XXIV.

GOLD MINES—A NEW CITY — NATIVE DEFENCES — KAURI FOREST — A HARD RIDE—KATI KATI—TAURANGA GATE PAH, AND CEMETERY—OHINEMUTU —A VOLCANIC REGION.

GRAHAMSTOWN, THAMES GOLD-FIELDS,
March 23, 1877.

MY DEAR ALEXA,—You see I have struck quite a new line of country—very different to peaceful Kawau, which we left a fortnight ago, returning to Auckland for a change. Now Lady Gordon and the children have once more gone back to the isle, but I determined to see something of the country, so in the first instance came here to see real gold-diggings. Five hours by steamer brought me to this great baby town, where kindest welcome awaited me in the home of Captain Fraser, the warden of the gold-fields, an Inverness man, who has lived out here for many years, and is immensely respected. His wife comes from Fife, and I find we have several friends in common. Though a gentle little lady, she must be a woman of rare pluck, for all through the Maori war, when her husband had contracts for commissariat, &c., she herself had, in his absence, to superintend all the farrier and blacksmith work, do what she could

[1] He did, however, return with us to Fiji, and shortly afterwards was sent home in command of his men. He died in Edinburgh, not long after his return.

to prevent the men from drinking (in which task she was often unsuccessful), and look after the packing and despatching of a whole regiment of pack-horses. She had also to keep all the accounts, and attend to many other matters. At other times she was left quite alone—that is, with only one maid-servant, and was warned every night that it would probably be her last. These are the sort of incidents you gather in those new countries, in the history of lives that seem so quiet!

I am amused to find that the gold-fields here are really great rocky mountains, and that there is not a scrap of level ground in the place, except what has been artificially constructed. So, after all, I have not found my way to "the diggings" as I supposed. I find that term only applies to the alluvial gold-fields, where gold has been washed down from the mountains. Here it is all embedded in quartz-veins running through the rocks, and needs hard work to get it out.

Eight years ago this place was all wild New Zealand bush—the mountains densely wooded to the shore. Now not a tree remains (save those planted in gardens); and the well-scraped hills are all burrowed, as if a colony of rabbits had been at work. When first gold was found here there was a grand rush, and this great town sprang up. Then it fell off; but within the last three weeks such a quantity of gold has been found in the Moanatairi mine, that the place is once more in a ferment, and large fortunes have been lost and won in a day over mining shares.

Of course I went to see the lucky mine. We had to walk along a main tunnel, three-quarters of a mile long, all lighted with gas, and the whole roof sparkling with tiny green stars—the lamps of a very ugly worm (not our glow-worm). From this main tunnel shafts descend to the different mines, and, in some cases, side drives diverge. The latter, being easier of access, suited me best, and answered the purpose as well. I went into various burrows, where the men were hard at work—generally two in partnership; and some nice lads worked extra hard (with pickaxe) to try and find a scrap of gold for me.

Then we went to see the batteries where the quartz is crushed and the gold extracted by various processes (all this by mighty machinery). But the most powerful of all is the huge pump, whose shaft is 650 feet deep, and which pumps all the mines. The water deposits silica in such quantities that the great tubes are coated every few days with an incrustation about an inch thick, that has to be removed with a chisel.

A good deal of the gold can only be got by pounding the quartz till it becomes white mud (through which quicksilver is run to amalgamate the gold). Then the quicksilver is boiled and distilled, and it passes off in steam, leaving the gold pure. The gold is brought to the bank to be melted again and made into bricks. I was there yesterday when 12,000 ounces were brought in, in six lumps larger than a man's head. They had to be broken up with wedge and sledge-hammer, into pieces small enough for the melting-pot, out of which the red gold was poured, when liquid, into moulds, already greased—or rather oiled—which oil blazed up; and then the mould was cooled in water, and the golden brick produced. I said red gold,—for so it looked when melted; but the bricks are sickly-looking, owing to the amount of silver in the ore—30 per cent.

So much for the gold which has produced this big baby town; but the town itself astonishes me most, as the growth of eight years—a large town, stretching along the shore for two miles; and apart from the huge batteries and chimneys and mining buildings of all sorts, it is quite a pleasant town,—great part of it built on land actually reclaimed from the sea by the mining-stuff thrown out (clean quartz and sandstone). Every miner has a nice house and garden, quantities of fruit and flowers, and generally a tidy wife and family.

On Sunday all work stops, and the whole population turn out, well dressed and orderly. There are churches of every conceivable denomination—all well filled. The Church of England, where we were on Sunday, is large and handsome, with a £300 stained-glass window. A very fine naval reserve corps, and a military cadet corps, were present (all miners); and there is a strong volunteer corps of Scotchmen (also miners). Altogether, I never saw a more satisfactory community than this big baby mining city; and having the beautiful sea is such an advantage—steamers always coming and going. I cannot help comparing the advantages of life in New Zealand with those of poor colonists in Fiji: why, in the matter of house-rent alone,—Captain Fraser bought this pretty house, with good garden and grounds, for £400; whereas at Levuka the Havelocks were paying £218 a-year rent for a much smaller house, with no garden to speak of.

Captain Fraser has just told me that he will make arrangements to enable me to ride across country into the wonderful volcanic district which I am longing to see. My luggage will return to Auckland by one steamer, and go thence by another steamer to

Tauranga, where I shall find it, so I can only keep as much as can be strapped to my side-saddle. When the plan was first suggested, I was told the tracks would be impassable and the ride impracticable; but Captain Fraser says that if I can stand some rough work, I can do it well enough. So he is taking no end of trouble to plan a pleasant expedition for me, and make my way easy; he will lend me his own horses, and is writing to his friends all along my route to request them to show me hospitality, and act escort from one point to the next.

So next Tuesday I am to go by steamer up the river Thames to Ohinemuri, and thence ride to the house of Mr Allom, who is here now, but returns home to-morrow, and who will put me up for a night; and next day he and his daughter will ride with me to Kati Kati, a new Irish settlement of colonists from Belfast, headed by Mr Vesey Stewart. The colony includes one Englishman—namely, Arthur Fisher, Bishop Eden's grandson! How I do stumble on home-links everywhere! He is to be electrified by a telegram, requesting him to meet us at the ford and guide us over. How astonished he will be!

All further stages of the road are planned with equal care, so I have the prospect of a very delightful expedition.

KATI KATI, *March* 29.

. . . I must tell you about my journey here from the Thames gold-fields. First, three hours in a capital little steamer, the Te Aroha, up the lovely river Thames, passing through forests of the white pine (*kahikatia*), with shapely blue hills beyond, and the banks of the river fringed with lovely vegetation—New Zealand flax, convolvulus, tree-ferns, masses of sweet-brier (imported), and splendid weeping willows, also imported, but now growing more luxuriantly than I ever saw them do in England. And here and there rich pasture-land and many cattle feeding, mostly the property of the Maoris, for we were now passing through lands reserved by the natives, and saw many of their villages.

We reached the steamboat's destination at sunset, when the hills were crimson and purple, and had the luck to see a real native *pah* which the inhabitants have just fortified, to prevent a hostile tribe from coming up the river. It was nothing to look at, only reeds and posts, but interesting of course. All the wild unkempt women came out to look at me, and we waved hands. Lucky for me that we were safe out of nose-rubbing distance! The civilised Maoris

have taken to European ways in every respect—have English houses, carriages, &c.; even dressing-tables with white muslin covers and pink lining!

At the landing-place I was met by Mr Allom. One of Captain Fraser's horses had been sent for me; I have my own excellent saddle, and we had a lovely moonlight ride of about five miles along the beautiful Ohinemuri river (that means "the girl I have left"). I received most cordial welcome from Mrs Allom, a handsome pleasant lady (none the less so for many years of severe roughing), and the mother of a large family. They are now living in a rough wooden shanty, and themselves doing all their cooking, &c., in the one living-room. They made me most comfortable; and at break of day Mrs A. was astir, quietly and unaffectedly, preparing a capital breakfast (having fed the horses herself at 4 A.M.), and at 7 A.M. Mr A., his eldest daughter, and I, started to ride here—a twenty-five miles' ride, which became twenty-eight by our having to make a long circuit round a swamp, as the foot-track which we were following crossed an innocent-looking creek, in which the foremost horse got hideously bogged.

Our first mile lay through the most exquisite tract of bush I have ever seen anywhere, though my experience in tropical isles has made me somewhat fastidious in this matter. But here nature seems to have surpassed herself, as if rejoicing in her own loveliness, so artistic is the grouping of varied foliage and clumps of delicate tree-ferns, and so rich the undergrowth of all manner of humbler forms. I saw some clusters of tree-ferns whose stems were nearly forty feet high, and matted with luxuriant creepers. These just touched by gleams of sunlight, stealing through the dark masses of foliage overhead; groups of the tall *matai* and *rimu*, the red or white pine, mingling with the various kinds of hardwood. You cannot conceive anything more lovely. Imagine my disgust on hearing the practical comment of a settler on this dream of beauty: "Oh yes, that block has been reserved for firewood!" implying that all the now dull country round was equally beautiful till it was "improved" by wholesome burning, to facilitate clearings. Such is the march of civilisation in all lands!

On the hills just above us lay a magnificent forest of the giant *kauri* pine, which is found only in this northern part of the north isle. It is a noble tree, its tall upright stems standing ranged like the pillars of some grand cathedral. It is so highly prized for timber that it is largely exported both to the southern isle and to Australia, consequently vast tracts which but a few years ago were

primeval forest are now utterly denuded. It is from the scrub-land where these forests once stood that the precious *kauri* gum is dug up in large clear lumps like amber. They are found within two feet of the surface, and are supposed to have been formed by the melting of the resin when the forests were burned.

High up on the mountain-side lies the new gold-field, "the Ohinemuri," only started two years ago. We could see the tiny tents and huts of the gold-miners, most of whom have their wives and families with them. It is a most romantic site for a camp, and one which I would fain have visited. The quartz is brought down thence by tramways to the batteries, which are placed further down the hill; and hard labour it has been to drag all that heavy machinery even so far, over hill and dale, through difficult bush, without even the semblance of a road. Such a gold-camp as this would be far more in keeping with our ideal, derived from Bret Harte, than the civilised city of Grahamstown, so I greatly regret that this was not included in my line of march; nothing could have been simpler, as my friends Captain Fraser and Mr Allom are in command of the whole.

As it was, I wistfully turned away from the exquisite fern paradise and the dark *kauri* forests, and then commenced a long ride across uninteresting plains bounded by commonplace hills. Towards noon we overlooked the seaboard, and paused to learn our day's geography from the vast map outspread below us, the horses, meanwhile, feasting on a kind of veronica, a shrub with purple blossoms, evidently highly appreciated. We, too, were conscious of having breakfasted at an unwonted hour, but could find no cool shady spot where we could halt for luncheon, till we reached a Maori settlement on the sea-coast.

Thence our way for the last few miles lay along the beach, on broad beautiful sand, with the wavelets rippling right under the horses' feet. It would have been most enjoyable could we either have gone leisurely, or unburdened. But as it was, we had to hurry on, in order to cross a wide tidal creek at low tide, and already the tide was on the turn. So we had to keep up a hard swinging gallop, and (being as yet a novice in the arts of bush-travelling, in a land where there are no patient coolies ever ready to run miles and miles with luggage) I was encumbered with a heavy travelling-bag insecurely strapped to the pommel—sketching materials ditto—opera-glasses keeping time against my side, and a large umbrella, which I dared not open, though the sun was burning. Having to hold on to all these, and keep up our un-

flagging pace, was to me desperately fatiguing, and after all, we reached the creek too late, and there was nothing for it but to wait patiently at the little lonely telegraph-station for a couple of hours, when Mr Field, the civil young clerk, offered to row us to our destination (four miles).

This proved fortunate, for the hard gallop in the sun had exhausted me, and all in a minute I turned giddy and unconscious, which would have been awkward had we been half-way across the wide, and at all times unpleasant, ford; as it was, I was all right in a few minutes, and Mr Field made me lie down in his wee room till it was time to start, when we had a lovely moonlight row, and landed here—all three, total strangers—to find that Arthur Fisher and our host and hostess were all alike absent. But we were most hospitably received by two sweet lady-like girls under thirteen, and five sons, the youngest a dear little fellow of four, with a kind good nurse. It had been intended that we should continue the ride to Tauranga to-day, but when I found it was forty miles, and no resting-place by the way, I cried off, and am going down the lake (twenty-five miles) by boat. Mr Allom and his daughter will return home from here.

OHINEMUTU, *Easter Day* 1877.

Two years, this morning, since we sailed from Marseilles! This is not very like Easter Day, but is certainly novel. I might say, not suggestive of heaven so much as of the Inferno, for the land on every side of us is but a thin crust, through which boiling springs burst up in every direction, and clouds of hot steam rise from every tuft of ferns or tempting bit of foliage. Each spring seems to differ from all the others in the character of the water—the mineral qualities I mean; so when they have been duly analysed, there will be some to suit every complaint under heaven. Even now many people have been cured by them of long-standing rheumatism—but it is not safe to be the first to experimentalise. Not long ago two gentlemen determined to try all the springs in succession, and at last one of them became paralysed. However, it is safe enough to indulge in the usual regulated baths, in which you can remain as long as ever you please; and very delightful they are—no matter how tired you may be, you seem to come out all right. The regular thing, however, is for the whole population, of both sexes, to bathe together in the warm mud, and then swim about in the cool lake: and white gentlemen are apt to be rather

startled when a dusky damsel swims up to them and offers a whiff of her pipe!

But I must take up the thread of my story where I left off—namely, the voyage down the lake from the Irish settlement at Kati Kati to Tauranga. It was in a small boat, rowed by one old man. He accepted me as a "pal," and told me off to steer,—and didn't he just keep me in order! But owing to the tides and the mangrove-swamps, which had to be avoided, it was 4 P.M. before we were able to start, and it was 12 P.M. ere we reached Tauranga, and my poor old boy was so exhausted that he could not row round to the pier, so landed me on a mud-swamp half a mile off. Luckily it was a bright moonlight night, and so bitterly cold that a walk was quite a pleasure, though a good deal of it was ankle-deep in mud; so we left my saddle in the boat till morning, not without some qualms on my part, and started to find the house of Mrs Edgecumbe, to whom I had been consigned by Captain Fraser. Of course, the house was shut up, and I felt rather shy of walking up and knocking at such an hour. Happily my host was a light sleeper, and answered instantly; and in a second a cheery English maid welcomed me, took me to the kitchen and warmed me, by which time my host was dressed, and fed me with all good things. His wife had gone to Auckland with a sick child. They had arranged that Arthur Fisher was to be on the watch for me—on the pier—till all reasonable hours had passed. And there he actually did wait till 2 A.M., which, however, I did not know till next morning, when he came to escort me over the town of Tauranga, which has a deep interest, as the scene of one of the most dreadful fights with the Maoris—that of the Gate Pah, where so many English officers were killed. I found in the very picturesque cemetery the names of various men I knew. It is a lovely spot by the sea, and lovingly cared for—a green headland, where bright blossoms bloom beneath the shelter of English willows, and scented geraniums grow in wild profusion among the rocks.

This was on Good Friday, and Arthur and I had naturally intended going to church; but we found closed doors, the parson and his people being in a curious state of antagonism. In Auckland all church services are elaborate, and the two bishops were holding mission services, but I cannot say the country districts seem very well cared for. As concerns the Maoris (who began by being as warm Christians as our Fijians now are), a vast multitude who, previous to the war, were apparently most reverent and devout, have now a profound contempt for the white man's religion: and

so, having either banished or murdered their teachers, they have invented new religions for themselves—strange compounds of many creeds, mingled with most utter absurdities. But even such as continue to be Christians now seem to be deserted by their teachers, and the churches stand empty. Even to-day—Easter—there has been no service in this large settlement.

At Tauranga I was able to hire a good bush-carriage and strong four horse team, with relay, for the forty miles' drive. Most of it lay through the bush, but its beauty has been destroyed by the wholesale felling of the tree-ferns, whose black stems are closely laid as sleepers across the worst parts of the very worst bush-road I ever saw. It seemed a more cruel misuse of these lovely plants than even the Fijian custom of employing them largely in house-building. Here, from their low estate, many of the forgiving plants put forth fresh fronds, and the muddy road was fringed with a border of tender green.

On arriving here I found two tidy little hotels, and decided to stay at Mrs Wilson's, where I have received the utmost hearty kindness, and am very well cared for. There are three ladies and some gentlemen staying in the house, for the sake of the healing waters.

Ohinemutu is a native settlement on the shores of Lake Rotorua, situated in the very midst of boiling springs of every variety. As you look down on the village you catch glimpses of the little brown huts appearing and disappearing through veils of white vapour. The whole country round seems to be steaming, and every step requires caution lest you should carelessly plunge through the thin and treacherous crust of crisp baked soil, into unknown horrors that lie below. If you thrust a walking-stick into the ground, the steam immediately rises from the opening thus made. At every few steps you came to a boiling pool, often wellnigh concealed by a fringe of rare and delicate ferns of the most exquisitely vivid green—a peculiarity shared by all the plants which flourish in this perpetual vapour-bath. In some places a greenish gelatinous or slimy vegetable substance grows in the crevices of the rock where the boiling spray constantly falls. It belongs to the family of algæ, and ranks low in the scale of organisation. The marvel is, how any form of life can exist in such a temperature. It is the salamander of the vegetable kingdom.

Here, as in every other volcanic region I have visited, I am struck by the exceeding coldness of springs and streams lying close to boiling fountains,—a system of hot and cold water baths which

the Maoris readily adapt to use, by leading a small conduit from each to a rudely constructed tank, in which they can regulate the temperature by turning on the hot or cold stream. Some of the ordinary bathing pools, which are not thus artificially cooled, are so responsive to the influence of the north and east winds, that while these blow the temperature rises from 100° to 190°, and bathing becomes impossible till the wind changes. Very often the wind blows from the north-east every morning for weeks together, and dies away at sunset, when the water (which at noon had reached boiling-point) gradually becomes comparatively cool.

The natives consider these luxurious baths to be a certain cure for all manner of ills. And so they doubtless are; but, as each pool differs from all its neighbours in its chemical combinations, it follows that bathing here at random must be about as unsafe, though decidedly not so unpleasant, as tasting all the contents of a chemist's shop by turns. But a certain number of the pools have been so long tried by the Maoris that their beneficial results are well proven; and many sufferers, chiefly those afflicted with rheumatism, are carried up here totally helpless, and in most instances derive immense benefit from drinking and bathing in these mineral waters.

Of the many thousand hot and cold springs which bubble around us in every direction, a limited number only have as yet been analysed, but these prove that the various chemical combinations are practically without number, no two pools being alike. All the mineral waters of Europe seem to be here represented—Harrogate and Leamington, Kreutznach and Wiesbaden, and many another—so that doubtless ere long this district will become a vast sanatorium, to which sufferers from all manner of diseases will be sent to nature's own dispensary to find the healing waters suited to their need. There are mud-baths, containing sulphate of potash, soda, lime, alumina, iron, magnesia, hydrochloric acid, sulphuric acid, sulphuretted hydrogen, silica, and iodine. Other springs contain monosilicate of lime, of iron, manganese, chloride of potassium, of sodium, sulphate of soda and of lime, silica, phosphate of alumina, magnesia, chloride of potassium, oxide of iron, and various other chemical substances. I believe that carbonic acid has not been found; but small quantities of lithium, iodine, and bromine are present in almost every instance. In some cases iodine is found in considerable quantities, notably in those springs to which the Maoris chiefly resort for the cure of skin diseases.[1]

[1] Here is the analysis of a famous sulphur-bath at Sulphur Point, about a mile

All the ordinary cares of housekeeping are here greatly facilitated by nature. She provides so many cooking-pots that fires are needless—all stewing and boiling does itself to perfection. The food is either placed in a flax basket, and hung in the nearest pool, or else it is laid in a shallow hole and covered with layers of fern and earth to keep in the steam. In either case the result is excellent, and the cookery clean and simple. Laundry-work is made equally easy. Certain pools are set aside in which to boil clothes; and one of these, which is called Kairua, is the village laundry *par excellence*. Its waters are alkaline, and produce a cleansing lather; and they are so soft and warm that washing is merely a pleasant pastime to the laughing Maori girls. No soap is required. Mother Nature has provided all that is needful: sulphate of soda, chloride of potassium and of sodium, enter largely into her preparations for washing-day.

My good landlady has had a bitter grief connected with her laundry-pool. About two months ago her youngest child toddled down the garden and fell in, and was so terribly scalded that it died immediately. I have heard several other cases of grown-up people and horses falling into boiling caldrons, but it seems to me marvellous that such accidents do not happen daily, so vague are the little paths, and so numerous the dangers.

Even the narrow neck of greensward where the dead are laid in their last sleep is all steaming, and boiling springs bubble round the graves. We paused beside the grassy mound which marks where the little child was laid. There are no headstones to tell who lie there, but the place is marked by great wooden posts, with rudely carved heads, which at one time formed part of a noted *pah*, the greater part of which, however, has subsided beneath the lake. Only a few very fine pieces of quaint, grotesque, old Maori carving lie about the place, rotting on the ground; and none dare carry them away, for their ownership is disputed, and the place is *tapu*.

The walls of the native council-house are entirely covered with this grotesque carving—hideous figures, with faces much tattooed, and oblique eyes of the Mongol type, formed of iridescent pearl-shell, but this is all modern work, and less elaborate than that of olden days, when time was not so marketable, and skilled labour more abundant.

from Ohinemutu. The cures it has effected are so wonderful and undoubted that it is generally known as The Painkiller.

Analysis.—Sulphate of potash, 2.93; of soda, 34.37; chloride of sodium, 59.16; of calcium, 3.33; of magnesia, 1.27; of iron, 0.25; silica, 16.09; hydrochloric acid, 7.60; sulphuretted hydrogen, 2.01; traces of phosphate of alumina, lithium, and iodine;—total, 127.04.

But I think the true village councils are held in the open air, where the favourite lounge is an open space rudely paved with large stones, which, by imprisoning the steam from some of the boiling springs, become pleasantly heated; and here the grave fathers of the hamlet love to recline, wrapped in their blankets or flax cloaks. Of course it is still more luxurious to sit up to your neck in a hot mud-bath, but it would not do to stay there all day. Some people prefer sulphur-baths, and these they can have to their hearts' content within a short distance, as there are real sulphur-pools giving forth the most horrible fumes: and the ground all round is primrose-hued, being thickly incrusted with pure sulphur.

But I believe that sulphur is found more abundantly at Tiritere, on the shores of Rotoiti, a beautiful lake, only separated from Rotorua by an isthmus half a mile in breadth, and likewise surrounded by chemical springs and bubbling mud-pools.

Each of the little hotels has its own natural hot baths, in which it is the height of luxury and repose to lie for an hour or so at night after a hard day's scramble. But, as I before said, the Maoris have no idea of such solitary enjoyment. To them bathing is a social delight, to be indulged in at all times and seasons, especially in the evenings, when young men and maidens, old men and children, assemble in the lake, which is pleasantly warmed by many hot springs. Certain pools are the special playgrounds of the children, and it is a most amusing sight to see these brown water-babies disporting themselves by the hour. They swim like fishes, as do also their elders, an accomplishment inherited from their beautiful ancestress, the lovely Hinemoa. She was the daughter of a grand old chief, whose tribe lived near the shores of this lake, and who would not suffer her to marry her heart's choice, whose name was Tutenekai, and who lived on the island of Mokoia, in the middle of Lake Rotorua. They drew up all the canoes lest she should be tempted to go to him; and as the island is nearly four miles distant, they never dreamt that she would attempt to swim. But love triumphed. One night the sound of his lute came floating over the lake, and, determined not to be baffled, she took six hollow gourds and fastened them to her shoulders, three on each side. Then she fearlessly plunged into the dark waters, and swam till she was exhausted. Buoyed up by the gourds, she lay still and rested a while, then with renewed strength she swam onward, guided by the sound of the lute, and at last landed in safety. But having left her robe on the mainland, she shrank from appearing before her lover in the garb of

Eve, so she hid herself in a warm spring, and there after a while he found her, and wrapped his cloak around her, and took her to his home, where she became his wife, and the mother of children beautiful as herself. And to this day her descendants are noted for their comeliness and for their clear olive complexion; and they love to tell the tale of how Hinemoa swam across the lake in the dark moonless night. On the Horo Horo ranges, on the road to Taupo, they point out a tall rock which bears her name.

This island of Mokoia was formerly strongly fortified, and was the scene of bloody fights between the Arawa and Ngapuhi tribes. Here, for greater security, the Arawas kept the symbol of their worship, which was merely a lock of human hair, twined round a rope of paper mulberry bark. It was treated with deepest reverence, and kept in a house of most sacred wood, thatched with *Manga Manga*, a lovely climbing fern, similar to the *Wa kolou*, or god fern, with which the Fijians used to adorn the ridge-pole of their temples. Both Maoris and Fijians are remarkable for an almost total absence of any outward and visible representation of the gods whom they worshipped, so this curious symbol possessed especial interest. The sacred lock of hair came to grief in A.D. 1818, when the *pah* was captured by the Ngapuhi tribe, and the god of the conquered was ignominiously tomahawked.

I am now in the heart of a tract of marvellous volcanic country which extends from the great Lake Taupo to the sea-coast, and reappears at Whakari or White Island, about twenty-eight miles from the land, thus forming a volcanic chain extending over 150 miles. White Island, which is only about three miles in circumference, is itself an active volcano, and though the crater is not more than 860 feet above the sea-level, it sends forth volumes of steam, which in calm weather are estimated to rise to a height of 2000 feet. Smaller geysers and hot sulphureous lakes cluster round this centre; and although some scrubby vegetation has sprung up, no living creature is here found.

As seen from the sea, the shores of the island are apparently rich green meadows, but on nearer inspection these prove to be composed of pure crystallised sulphur: and the whole land is so heated that it is scarcely possible to walk over it. I have seen some beautiful specimens of sulphur which had been brought from there, resembling lumps of primrose-coloured rock.

At the farther end of the volcanic chain lies the great Lake Taupo, which is about twenty by thirty miles in extent, and beyond which rises the sacred mountain Tongariro, an active vol-

cano, vomiting fire and smoke from the cinder-cone, which rises dark and bare from a base of perpetual snow. Its height is 6500 feet, but it is overtopped by Ruapehu, the highest point in the island, one of its three snowy peaks rising to upwards of 9000 feet.

Geologists suppose the bed of Lake Taupo to have been one vast crater; and it seems probable that it has some subterranean outlet, from the fact that the lake receives a much larger supply of water than that which it discharges by the Waikato river, which flows through it. The Maoris dare not approach the sacred isle in the centre of the lake for fear of an evil dragon which dwells there, and swallows every rash canoe that presumes to draw near,—a legend from which some infer that there really is a whirlpool there, caused by the rush of water down the old chimney of the crater. A great part of the lake is hemmed in by basaltic cliffs, rising sheer from the water about 700 feet, and quite inaccessible. Over these dash mountain torrents, which fall in silvery spray. The lake is ofttimes swept by sudden storms, and its angry waters make a gloomy foreground to the grand mountains beyond.

The country between Mount Tongariro and Lake Taupo is all intensely volcanic; and the dark-green scrub which clothes the hills is dotted by columns and wreaths of steam, rising from thousands of boiling springs — those in the neighbourhood of the Waikato river falling over its rocky banks in seething cataracts, and depositing in their course a bed of white stalagmite, which adds greatly to their apparent size. At certain seasons these geysers are more active than at others. There is one which has been said to eject water with such violence as to swamp canoes at a distance of 100 yards; and another, the steam of which is visible at a distance of fifteen miles.

Below the lake, on the Waikato river, is the Tewakaturou geyser, which used to throw water right across the river—130 yards—but is now nearly quiescent, and only gives a sobbing gasp and spout every few minutes, throwing up a splash of scalding water, as if it would drive away the ruthless thief who tries to steal "specimens" of its work. The geysers thereabouts are so numerous that from some points you can count from sixty to eighty columns of steam in sight at one moment; and at the point where the Waikato enters the lake there are upwards of 500 pools, either of boiling mud or boiling water; while the neighbouring mountain of Kakaramea seems to have been so thoroughly steamed as to be little more than a soft mass of half-boiled mud, with scalding water and

steam issuing from every crevice. A tribe of Maoris were once rash enough to build a village near here, but it was overwhelmed by an avalanche of mud, and all the inhabitants perished.

There is a Maori settlement in the midst of a very wonderful group of springs and terraces at Orakei-Korako, on the Waikato river, and the little brown huts are actually built on the mounds of white silica, with apparently no thought of danger. Chemical deposits of all sorts have stained the earth and rocks with every conceivable hue—copperas-green, ferruginous orange, the delicate primrose of sulphur, and every shade of salmon and pale rose colour, deepening to dark red, appear in marked contrast with the dazzling white silica and the dark-green scrub. Both the river-bank and the terraces are fringed with deep stalactites, streaked with these varied hues.

Near this point there is a fairy-like alum-cave. The entrance is veiled by tall silver tree-ferns, growing in rank profusion; and the red walls of the cave are incrusted with pure white alum, deposited from a pool of the loveliest light-blue warm water. This place is about forty miles from Ohinemutu and thirty from the village of Taupo, which stands on the shore of the lake.

Taupo is quite a large settlement, and possesses two hotels, a post-office, and even a telegraph. About two miles off lie a group of springs, which it is intended to treat as a sanatorium. They are Government property, and the land around them is fertile, and is laid out in gardens and grass fields. A picturesque blue river flows near, between steep crags, finely wooded: the descriptions of the spot are most attractive. One very singular boiling pool is known as the Witches' Caldron. It lies in a circular hollow in the river-bank, about thirty feet above the stream. The water is pure blue, but every shade of orange, brown, green, and red appear on the rocks around it. Heavy clouds of steam are constantly thrown up with a roaring noise.

It matters little in what direction you travel in this weird region, fresh wonders reveal themselves on every hand. If, instead of taking the coach-road to Lake Taupo, you prefer riding there, you may follow a bridle-path along the Paeroa valley at the foot of a range of boiling mountains. Literally the whole Paeroa range is a boiling mass of chemicals, so thinly crusted over, that the most foolhardy adventurer dare not attempt to climb it, for even what to the eye appears solid ground, is all crumbling and brittle as pie-crust, from the constant action of internal steam, and all manner of gases. Sulphuric acid, sulphur and sulphuretted hydrogen, rise in

intermittent clouds from the whole surface of the range, which, from base to summit, is covered with patches of yellow, grey, white, and red, which tell of solfataras and fumaroles, mud-pools and sulphur-banks. Some of the boiling springs take these colours, and the water of one is bright yellow, while the next is clear green. Many are fringed with purely tropical ferns, but the ordinary vegetation of a New Zealand bush contrives to flourish on the lower slopes of the range, and even fringes the Waikato river, which is quite hot.

There is a road all the way from Tauranga to Lake Taupo, and thence to Napier, with coaches running weekly; and I regret more than I can express, not having allowed myself time to make this expedition, and to see all this marvellous region thoroughly. I could easily have left Kawau a little sooner had I realised the amazing interest that awaited me here—as it is, I dare not linger, for those aggravating Pacific mail-steamers vow that they will call at Fiji next month, positively for the last time. They have kept us thus on tenter-hooks for a year—never knowing from one mail to the next whether our letters would be dropped or not. About five months ago, when Mr Gordon had been sent here on sick-leave he hurried back much too soon, in order to catch the very last chance. You know how, three months ago, we came to Khandavu, scarcely venturing to hope the big steamer would call, and now we are told that if we choose to be ready to return by next mail we shall be dropped at Khandavu. How we are to get from there to Levuka will be the next question, as it is a long day's steam, and now poor little Fiji possesses no steamer of any sort or kind! She cannot afford even to hire the little steamer which she had when we came away.

So, much as we shall regret leaving New Zealand so hurriedly, we dare not lose this opportunity, as the option of going all the way to Sydney, on the chance of a steamer from there to Levuka, is not tempting. Therefore I must be satisfied with seeing the chief objects of interest in the neighbourhood of Rotomahana, "the hot lake," round which are concentrated wonders of every description.

I do not know what link exists between the Maoris and the Fijians, but some of the words in common use sound to me strongly akin. For instance, the name of the river which receives the hot springs is Waikato. In Fiji, boiling water is *kata kata na wai*—surely the two are identical? The ovens in which food is cooked are just the same as Fijian ovens, except that when the fire has been kindled, and the stones heated, a wet mat is laid over the red-hot stones, and over that a layer of green fern; then comes the food,

and next another layer of fern, over which water is thrown, and the whole is quickly covered up with earth to prevent the steam from escaping. I must say our Fijians are immensely superior to these people in the matter of house-building. The Maori *wharries* are wretched dirty little hovels, from which every breath of air is carefully excluded: being built actually on the ground, they are necessarily damp, and, in a rainy season, must be swamped, as there seems no attempt at drainage. They contrast very unfavourably with the clean comfortable Fijian houses, built on well-raised foundations, in which we have lived so happily. I think that to have to claim a night's shelter in a Maori *wharry* would be quite as uninviting as to be driven to accept the hospitality of a very poor Highland bothy.

The people are alike in their love of smoking. Here men, women, and children smoke incessantly. They grow their own tobacco, and carve their own pipes from a sort of white stone found in this neighbourhood. I am glad the Fijians are content with the little cigarettes, which the girls twist up in bits of banana-leaf.

I am to start for Rotomahana to-morrow morning, and return here just in time to catch the steamer at Tauranga. I hear there are some very curious sulphur-springs, white cones, and mud-baths at a place called Whaka-rewa-rewa, about three miles from here, so I am just going off to see them. I have borrowed an execrable side-saddle from a Maori girl, having left my own at Tauranga, and have hired a horse for the afternoon. Sissie Wilson, daughter of my landlady, is going with me—she rides a man's saddle. I am told that in January and February the principal geyser at this place throws up a column of water from forty to fifty feet high at intervals of eight minutes, but I fear it will probably be as sleepy as the great geyser here, which is sometimes very active, but is now at rest. Many of these fountains are intermittent. Sometimes groups play alternately, at other times periodically, at intervals of so many minutes. These geysers seem to be strangely influenced by atmospheric changes. Captain Mair, whose headquarters are at Ohinemutu, has made careful observations of these phenomena. He says the geysers at Whaka-rewa-rewa are most active when the wind blows from the west or south-west, when they frequently throw up a fountain fifty or sixty feet high. From 7 to 9 A.M. and from 3 to 4 P.M. are their working hours, while the noontide is almost invariably a time of rest. There is one geyser known as the Bashful Geyser (Whakaha-rua) because it only begins to play after dark.

10 P.M.—It is something to be able to say that I have returned here safely, for, indeed, exploring such a country as this is "no canny." Certainly, I thought to-day that we were nearing the infernal regions. This morning I thought the springs here were fearful and wonderful, but they are nothing compared with those we have seen this afternoon. The great fountain refused to play, but I was fascinated by the white marble-like cones from which it and its smaller neighbours spout. They are like frozen snowdrifts, or heaps of gigantic wedding-cakes, from ten to twenty feet. in height, with a thick coating of iced sugar. This is caused by the white silica, which is constantly deposited by the falling waters, rising from a funnel in the centre. To-day the geyser was so quiet that we were able to peer down into its depths, and could hear the water bubbling and boiling far below; but such prying is at all times rash, for at any moment a column of scalding water may shoot far overhead, and give one a shower-bath not to be quickly forgotten.

These silvery cones seemed to be veined with gold, for each tiny air-tube and fissure is incrusted with sparkling crystals of sulphur, very tempting to touch, but hazardous—as the invisible steam rushing through them is more scalding than that from any larger surface. In the midst of the gleaming white cones there is one which is pure yellow, being altogether composed of sulphur, though a thin treacherous crust of black mud has partly overspread it, luring the unwary to step on to very dangerous ground, which is apt at any moment to give way. The most remarkable of these cones and basins are clustered round, and on, a little hill, and I soon scrambled to a higher level, to sketch the whole group, in spite of the remonstrance of a picturesque Maori, who seemed to have some dim idea that he could exact payment for allowing me this privilege. He was accompanied by a little girl, with a tiny toddling brother, the latter hugging a kitten in his small arms. It is a strange home in which to rear a family, but all seem strong and healthy. They live in a little *wharry* close by, where they offer mineral specimens and petrifactions for sale.

All along the Puaranga creek there are literally hundreds of geysers, solfataras, and boiling mud-pools, varying as much in temperature as in chemical properties. In two basins lying close together the thermometer registers respectively 185° and 55° Fahr.; and the colour of the water is equally diversified, varying from emerald-green or the clearest turquoise blue, to delicate rose or bright yellow, according to the character of the decomposed rock

which chances to find itself in the great subterranean boiler. Some of the jets hiss and roar with deafening, bewildering noise; and, as the pools of black boiling mud gurgle and bubble, a feeling of creeping dread comes over one lest the ground should give way, or one's foot slip, and so one should be engulfed in a grave of such unspeakable horror.

I passed on from one new marvel to another, grieving to leave any corner unexplored, not knowing what strange beauties might lie hidden by each dark clump of bush; and yet fully warned that every step off the beaten track was fraught with real danger. But not till sunset could I turn away from scenes so fascinating—and then, oh dear! how hateful was the ride home on the Maori child's saddle! I wished I had had courage to try riding like my companion. However, once here, a blessed remedy awaited me in the delicious natural hot bath, in which I have lain for the last hour, and forgotten all my aches and bruises, and now need only a good night's rest to be quite ready for to-morrow's journey in search of scenes still more wonderful.

CHAPTER XXV.

BEWILDERING NEW SURROUNDINGS — THE MAORI DRAGON — BREAKFAST AT WAIROA — THE MISSION-HOUSE — THE HOT LAKE — WHITE TERRACES — SULPHUR AND MUD VOLCANOES — AN UNJUST CLAIM RESISTED — CHAMPIONS FROM THE ANTIPODES.

IN A TINY TENT NEAR THE WHITE TERRACES,
ROTOMAHANA, *Tuesday Night, April* 3, 1877.

Now indeed I have found a land of wonders, such as, I fancy, has no equal, unless perhaps in the volcanic region of Hawaii, which, from all descriptions, must stand pre-eminent.[1] But all that

[1] Since the above was written I have spent two months in the Hawaiian Isles, and have lived a never-to-be-forgotten week on the very brink of the great active crater. I consider that it is wellnigh impossible to compare the two scenes, and that in order to obtain a just idea of volcanic forces it is highly desirable to visit both—that is to say, such an active volcano as that on Hawaii, and such groups of geysers and solfataras as those of New Zealand. In the former, nature admits you, as it were, to her mighty arsenal, and suffers you to stand and gaze while she is in the very act of forging the strong ribs of the earth. There she shows you sometimes a vast lake of molten fire—liquid lava—sometimes dancing fire-fountains—sometimes all beauty, at others all awe; blackness of darkness, sulphureous fumes, fearful detonations; sometimes a column of fire shooting heavenwards, and falling to

I have seen here is truly amazing, and much as I had heard of it, the reality far surpasses my expectations. It is heaven and hell in alternate glimpses, so marvellous are some beauties, so dread the horrors.

I can hardly persuade myself that it is only four days since I left Tauranga, so infinitely varied are all the new impressions which hour by hour have crowded upon me. I seem to have lived in a bewildering maze of steam and steam-power gone mad—columns of steam puffing up from every bush, steam roaring as though all the engines in Europe were bellowing and snorting simultaneously, or steam rising in quiet mists and wreaths as it is now doing even in this tiny tent which the Maoris pitched for us on what they knew to be one of the very few safe spots. Yet even here the steam is rising through the ground; the sheet of American cloth, which I laid beneath my blanket, is wrinkled like the hands of a washer-woman, though our tent is floored with thick layers of fern and *manukau*, and the paper on which I am writing is quite damp, as is all my drawing-paper.

We have stood by to watch volcanoes being created, and then as quickly destroyed—volcanoes of mud and volcanoes of sulphur; we have watched geysers of every sort, active and quiescent, playing in green pools and in blue pools; and, above all, we have walked up and down, all over the wondrous marble stairways, till their loveliness has become a familiar thing; and oh, wonderful new sensation! new possibility in luxury! we have bathed in those perfect marble baths, selecting from among a thousand, the very pool of the exact temperature and depth that seemed most pleasant, and therein have lain rejoicing like true Maoris, till we ourselves were coated with a thin film of silica from the flinty water, so that we feel like satin, a delight to ourselves.

It is so strange to look out from this little tent and see clouds of white steam continually curling up from the thicket of dark *manukau* scrub which lies between us and the blue lake, on the other side of which rise more dark hills, and another flight of terraces, not quite so large as these white ones, near which our tent is pitched, but in some respects even more beautiful. They are called

earth to pour down the mountain-side in overwhelming streams of fluid fire. Her finished works, too, the varied lava-beds, whether smooth or contorted, are unlike any other scenes in creation.

But nowhere on Hawaii have I seen or heard of anything in the slightest degree resembling the strange and beautiful objects to be seen in the volcanic region of New Zealand—which, like that of the Yellowstone in America, seems to be nature's laboratory, where chemical experiments of all sorts are being tried on a gigantic scale, producing things of beauty in infinite variety.

the pink terraces, but are really of a pale salmon colour. You cannot think how lovely they are by moonlight! At the base of these pink terraces there is a great sulphur-volcano, which tinges all the land and water near it of a clear lemon colour. And from all the dark hills on every side rise columns of white steam, telling us how thin is the crust which divides us from the wonderful laboratory down below. Everything is so new and strange that I hardly know what to tell you first. Perhaps I had better begin in detail from the beginning.

I left Ohinemutu at 6 A.M. on Monday morning, and a coach-and-four brought me fourteen miles over a road (if I may so call it) like the bed of the wildest mountain torrent. How any springs in the world can stand it I cannot imagine. We passed Lakes Tikitapa, Roto Rua, and Roto Kahahi (the blue lake and the lake of shells).

Lake Tikitapa, which is overshadowed by steep wooded hills, is the scene of an old Maori legend, which tells how Tu-whare-toa, the St George of New Zealand, here did battle with Taniwha, the great dragon, which he conquered, but did not slay, only stipulating that it should thenceforth live quietly at the bottom of the lake. So now the only sign of life it gives is occasionally to trouble the dead calm of the deep blue waters, which rise in crested waves; and strangers think that this is the work of the mountain breeze, but the Maoris know that Taniwha is turning over restlessly, weary of his long captivity.

We reached Wairoa in time to breakfast at a comfortable well-kept little hotel, the present landlord of which is an Irish gentleman of good family—son of a general in her Majesty's army. I sat at breakfast beside a private of the armed constabulary, in whom I recognised a member of one of the best old families in Suffolk. But having already found my coachman of the morning to be an agreeable and well-informed Oxford man, the son of an English vicar, who, like many another gentleman out here, has had his share of life's ups and downs, I began to realise that I have reached a new world, in which every man must sink or swim on his own merits, or his own luck, as the case may be, but wholly irrespective of that of his forefathers.

In the village of Wairoa a deserted church and school still stand to tell of the zeal of the early converts, whose Christianity proved as evanescent as the morning dew. At the outbreak of the war, they hanged one of their pastors, Mr Volkner; and the resident clergyman had to fly for his life.

Once more I have had the good fortune to find myself in the

position of friend's friend, for I had scarcely finished breakfast when Mr Way (to whom Mr Edgecumbe had written about me) came to escort me to his pretty home, the pleasant old mission station, now, alas! no longer used in its former capacity, but still held by a member of the family. For Mrs Way was a daughter of the house, born and bred here, loving both place and people, and marking with bitter pain the change that has crept over them since evil white influence has worked as a poisonous leaven to overthrow all the good that Christian teachers had so patiently striven to instil, with apparently such good result.

Greatly to my delight, Mrs Way volunteered to accompany me to the lakes, and to take with her a small tent, in which we might sleep for two or three nights. She herself speaks Maori like a native; and she has brought with her a dear old Maori nurse, who has been with her from her childhood, and who does our cooking. She also took a share in paddling our canoe.

Great was the noise and hubbub which arose when the Maoris learned that we purposed going in a different canoe to that which they had already determined on sending. No other travellers had arrived that morning, and so the whole village was contending for the fleecing of this one lamb. Horrible was the din which ensued. A happy thought at length struck Mrs Way. She determined to draw lots who should accompany us, and the novelty of the proceeding at once restored amity, and a pleasant set of cheery good-natured lads fell to our lot. They were all delighted with fate's decision, though well aware that my companion would allow no rum in her canoe. The rum is an objectionable feature, which is insisted on as an extra in all canoes engaged at the hotel, and which does not tend to improve the efficiency of the crew. The Maoris of the district have been so thoroughly spoilt by the English, that they are now rapacious to a degree, and well it is for me that I have Mrs Way to protect me. I was much amused to hear the Maoris all address her by her Christian name—the natural result of having all grown up together since childhood.

The canoes are of the rudest description—merely a tree hollowed out—and, not being balanced by any outrigger, they are peculiarly liable to overturn on the shortest notice. The large canoes carry fourteen or fifteen persons sitting single file—two paddles for each passenger. We had a row of about eight miles across Lake Tarawara, a very beautiful lake at the foot of a mountain of the same name—a truncated cone of bare rock 2000 feet high, and so singularly symmetrical that it needs small imagination

to behold in it the form of a vast tumulus; for it is the place of burial of the Arawa tribe, and is held so sacred that no traveller is allowed to set foot on it: the Maoris themselves consider it strictly *tapu*.

The lake is about five miles wide by seven in length. Its rocky shores are fringed with fine old trees, and the whole scenery is delightful. We passed close by a rock where custom demands that tribute be paid to the Atua or guardian spirit of the lake, to insure fair weather. It is an easily pleased spirit, for our offerings were only scraps of our luncheon; nevertheless, the weather has continued perfect—no trifling matter on such an expedition as this.

At the further side we ascended a creek with rapids, where we found the water quite warm; and in a few minutes we reached the hot lake, which lies about 900 feet above the level of the sea. I am told that many people say that their first feeling on arriving here is one of grievous disappointment. This, I confess, is to me incomprehensible, for though the general scenery round Rotomahana is not specially striking, it is certainly not ugly; and though the surrounding hills are only clothed with dark scrubby vegetation, they are relieved by countless wreaths of white vapour, marking the site of innumerable boiling springs and terraces, and suggesting the points of infinite interest, which lie hidden on every side.

The lake itself is very small—not a mile long, and less than half that width; and though it appears blue enough when seen from the land, its waters are turbid and greenish, and no fish or other creatures live in it, as you can well imagine, the boiling springs being as active below its surface as on its shores. But an immense number of wild-fowl of many sorts breed here, and are jealously preserved by the Maoris, who during the breeding season will not allow a canoe to pass up the creek, and under no circumstances will suffer a gun to be fired here. They do not, however, object to snaring, and the wild duck are so numerous that they are easily captured. Oyster-catchers also abound, as do also the Pukeho, a large and very handsome blue bird with scarlet head and feet.

On entering the lake, we found ourselves at the foot of the white marble terraces, which the Maoris call Te Tarata. I confess I quite despair of being able, by any words, to give you such a description as will enable you to form a true idea of their dream-like beauty. They are in nature what the Taj Mahal at Agra is in architecture,—a thing indescribable—a fairy city of lace carved in

pure marble,—a thousand waterfalls suddenly frozen and fringed with icicles. Perhaps you will best picture it to yourself as a steep hillside, artificially terraced so as to form hundreds of tiny fields—flooded rice-fields, such as we see in mountainous parts of India, and elsewhere; but the stone-work enclosing and sustaining each little lake is of white marble, fringed with stalactites resembling the most creamy-white coral, which, if it escapes the barbarous hands of tourists, should grow more beautiful year by year, as the ever-trickling water drips over it. So rapid is the deposit, that fern-leaves and sticks which drop into the water are in a few days so thickly incrusted, that they look as if they had been crystallised by a confectioner; and sometimes a dead bird falls in, and is apparently petrified while its flesh is still quite fresh.

So there are feathers and ferns enough to supply travellers with harmless mementoes, if only they would be content with these; but I regret to say that the method of proving the rapidity of this deposit which finds most favour with the snobs of all nations, is that of writing their names in pencil on the smooth porcelain surface, where, within a few hours, it is rendered indelible by a thin transparent coating of silica. One crime against good taste leads to another; and some ugly scars on the fair white surface show where curiosity hunters have taken the trouble to cut out and appropriate certain names of note.

To our shame be it spoken, this practice has called forth a grave rebuke from the Maoris, who have had a notice printed, in English, imploring visitors to abstain from defacing the beautiful terraces, either by writing their names or by breaking off stalactites, the slow deposit of ages.

The total height of the white terraces is only about 150 feet, and the width at the base about 300 feet; but the amount of beauty of detail crowded into this space defies description. While some of the terraces are so deep and bold as to suggest marble battlements of fairy citadels, others resemble gigantic clam-shells, filled to the brim with the most exquisite blue water, sometimes tinged with violet, which, as it drips from the lip of the shell, forms a deep fringe of the loveliest stalactites, generally pure white, but sometimes tinged with other colours. Each great shell-like bath partly overhangs the one below it, so that in some the bather can find shelter from the sun beneath this wonderful canopy with its dripping gems. All the lovely forms of frost crystals are here produced in enduring material, which alternately suggests rare mosses and fine lacework, all alike carved in white alabaster.

The source of all this beauty is a large boiling pool, situated about 150 feet above the lake. It is about 30 feet in diameter, and lies in a crater of about 260 feet in circumference, enclosing it on three sides with steep reddish cliffs, while on the fourth side, whence the marble terraces descend to the lake, there is a rocky island about 12 feet high, which seems to suggest that the walls of the crater may once have formed a complete circle, and have gradually been decomposed by the action of steam. By watching the ebb and flow of the boiling waves, it is generally possible to reach this island and look into the water-crater. Here, from unfathomable depths, wells a fountain of the most exquisite turquoise blue, and through the crystalline waters you discern the coral-like border which fringes both the inner and outer lip of the great porcelain basin which lines the crater.

When the wind blows from the south, the water sinks far down into the depths of the crater, and then, instead of the ordinary cream colour, the dazzling whiteness of the basin, and of the whole series of terraces, is like that of driven snow. At such times you can look right down the funnel, which measures about eight feet across: its sides are smooth, and as perpendicular as the shaft of a well. But such a sight cannot be obtained without risk; for occasionally, without a moment's notice, a vast column of water shoots far into the air, with a tremendous explosion, and the whole stairway becomes the bed of one wide waterfall. Generally, however, it is pretty safe to venture while the wind is southerly. But so soon as it changes, the water rises at the rate of three or four feet in an hour, heaving and roaring as it does so, till at length it shoots heavenward in a dazzling column sixty feet high and above twenty in diameter, and descends in blue ripples which overflow the terraces. The ordinary condition of the pool is tolerably equable, and only a slight upheaval of the centre, like that of a boiling, bubbling pot, marks it as a geyser. Its temperature is about 210° Fahr.; but the water gradually cools in its descent, and the basins near the level of the lake are comparatively cool. So this wonderful series of shell-shaped baths are not only of all sizes and depths, but also of every shade of temperature; and the height of luxury in bathing is to revel in each by turn, increasing in warmth as you approach the summit, or decreasing as you descend towards the lake.

Half the charm of these natural baths consists in the exquisite colour of the water, which is a chemical turquoise blue, so vivid that it is even reflected on the cloud of white steam which for ever

rises from the crater. The tone of the sky has no influence whatever in imparting this hue, which never varies, and looks strangely incongruous with a primrose or daffodil sunset, or when, as this morning, the grey clouds were flushed with rose-colour, but not a bit of blue was in the sky. Perhaps I may best describe the colour as cobalt dissolved in milk, but then it is perfectly transparent, and in some pools the water is tinged with amethyst, in others it is like liquid opals. I am quite at a loss to account for these varied colours, as all the pools are filled from one source, and the lovely cream-coloured basins in which the water lies are all formed by the continual deposit from the water itself.

I think the most plausible theory I have heard suggested as to the formation of these terraces is, that before the wall of the crater gave way, and allowed the imprisoned waters to escape, the hillside was clothed with the same scrub of dark *ti* tree or *manukau* and fern as covers all the country round; but as year by year the fluid flint flowed over and incrusted it, the whole became the basis for the series of pools, irregular in shape, size, and depth as we now behold them. You can imagine readily enough how a shrub like a gigantic heather-bush, thus bent forward by the pressure of water, would eventually become the rim of a very deep pool, in which swimmers would find ample room to move, while reeds and ferns would form only a shallow basin,—a fit bath for children. This theory, too, would account for the lip of some basins being smooth, or like a coil of rope carved in marble, while others are in just such clusters of stalactite as might be formed were a huge *manukau* bush the foundation on which the deposit was commenced. So delicate and apparently brittle is this nature-carved lace-work, that at first I felt compelled to tread lightly so as not to injure it; but I soon saw that this caution was needless, so I now reserve all my care to avoid stepping unnecessarily into the hot pools. I need scarcely tell you that such walking as this makes short work of the strongest boots!

With the rashness of a "new chum" (which is the colonial term to express a very green new arrival), I determined to ascend to the red cliff overlooking the crater, much to the disgust of the Maori who had taken charge of me, and whose experience had taught him a wholesome dread of the thin treacherous crust over which we had to climb. Finding his remonstrances were vain, he contented himself with cutting branches of brushwood with which to cover the most doubtful spots on which we had to tread. This acted in the same manner as huge Canadian snow-shoes, in diminish-

ing the risk of the thin crust of soil giving way beneath our footsteps. But certainly the peril is greater than I at first realised; for the whole rock is so undermined and disintegrated by the perpetual action of subterranean steam, that there is always danger of its crumbling away on the slightest pressure. When I rejoined Mrs Way, she heard my guide tell his companions that it was now their turn to escort the rash white woman, but that he would not risk his life again by accompanying her on such expeditions.

It seems that not long ago a gentleman persisted in thus exploring, though the Maoris positively refused to follow him. In a very few minutes a patch of apparently firm grass gave way, and he sank up to the waist; most fortunately it proved to be only a steam-hole. However, it was a sufficient warning, and he was happily able to scramble out by himself, and quickly retraced his steps.

It was difficult to turn away from anything so fascinating as the fairy-like white terraces; but my companion told me of other wonders in store. So she led me by a narrow path through the low gloomy bush, with countless boiling springs bubbling and steaming on every side of us,—some so veiled by overhanging ferns as to be dangerously invisible, while others throw up jets of water which at certain seasons attain a height of from thirty to forty feet —their steam, of course, rising far higher. One of these forms a small, clear, sea-green lake, which it lashes into boiling waves—literally boiling—and ceaselessly breaking on the shore in white foam. The temperature of the pool is 210° Fahr.

A few steps farther our path lay along a high ridge of rock, not two feet wide, separating two water-craters. In one lies a dark indigo-coloured pool, from which rises an upright column of dazzling white; while on the other side the water shoots out in a horizontal jet. Both are intermittent, and they play alternately. The colour of the volcanic rocks at that point is wonderful. The most vivid metallic gold, chrome yellow, green, brown, and red, appear mingled as in some strange patchwork, and the whole is traversed by myriad golden tubes of crystallised sulphur, through which the scalding steam issues in little white puffs.

The noise of all these roaring fountains was something deafening, —vulgarly suggestive of a crowded railway junction, with high-pressure engines puffing and blowing on every side. Each moment we were enveloped in clouds of steam which hid everything from our view; and in places the fumes of sulphur almost choked us. Occasionally there was a pause — a moment of awful silence, fol-

lowed by a subterranean rumbling of sulphureous gases, and then came a deafening explosion. It was a weird scene, yet so fascinating in its horror that only the recollection of how much there was still to see urged us onward.

There are other geysers scattered all over the hill, each having its own Maori name, which is generally descriptive—such as "the sighing fountain," "the quiet pool," "the long water," &c. Some spout three or four times a-day, others at regular intervals of so many minutes.

I believe there are about twenty-five terraces of the same sort as the one I have described to you—not on so large a scale, but still of some importance; and besides these there are an immense number of smaller ones in this immediate neighbourhood. Some of the geysers which produce these, occasionally throw up jets to the height of from twenty to thirty feet.

We halted a long time near an intermittent spring, which was playing in wild excitement, sometimes from one side of the basin, then the other, dashing its boiling waves against the enclosing rock walls with a mighty uproar. Sometimes for a few moments it seemed weary, and the clear transparent waters lay still and calm; then it uprose more turbulent than before, lashing itself into fury, and tossing up jets of solid water to a height of from twenty to thirty feet. Not far from this pool, there is a singular blow-pipe on the side of the hill. It is only about a foot in diameter, but from it rushes a ceaseless column of steam, working at high-pressure, and shrieking like some distressed spirit.

Still hurrying on through the dark *manukau* scrub, we next found ourselves beside a lake of half-cooled liquid grey mud, dotted all over with small mud volcanoes, each a perfect model of Vesuvius. From every cone issued puffs of white steam, shortly followed by a discharge of boiling clay, which, trickling down the cone, gradually increased its size. So liquid was the mud, that each miniature volcano was perfectly reflected in the pool.

On every side of us lay craters in which masses of thick boiling mud were being slowly upheaved—rising and falling with a dull muffled gurgle, and finally bursting in one huge bubble. It was a hideous sight, and gave me a more horrible feeling of repulsion than anything I ever remember. Dante might here have borrowed a new phase of horror for his 'Inferno.' The bare idea, that by the slipping of a foot one might be hopelessly engulfed in so appalling a tomb, was too dreadful, and I confess I turned away shuddering.

As we crossed a bed of dried-up cracked mud, our footsteps echoed as if the ground below was hollow, and it gave me a thrill of horror to think where we might land if that thin crust should give way! All the ground hereabouts is just steaming mud, but there are diversities in the degrees of horror. One mud-pool differs essentially from another. Many of them throw out a greasy clay of an ashen grey hue, which the Maoris eat with the greatest relish, not merely to appease hunger, but as a delicacy. A greedy man will swallow a pound weight of this edible clay immediately after a very good meal, and seems none the worse of his peck of dirt. Other mud-pools are full of dark slime, almost as black as pitch, and very hot: it is these which gurgle and burst in huge bubbles. Others, again, throw up enormous lumps of soft black mud, which fall back, to be again thrown up, as if the earth-spirits were indulging in a grim game at ball.

Though bewildered by the clouds of steam which encompassed us on every side, we still pressed on, but in a few moments were brought to a standstill by so deafening a roar that no thunder-crash you ever heard could equal it. It proceeded from a deep fissure in the rocks, whence rose blinding clouds of steam. We approached this Devil's Caldron as near as we dared, not able to hear a word either of us uttered; then, fairly stupefied, we turned away, thankful for the power of flight, and agreeing that we had surely been standing at the very mouth of hell.

Two minutes later we paused beside a perfectly cold calm green lake. Its water, though not clear, is green in itself, and, moreover, reflects the green scrub and ferns which clothe the encircling hills. It is not particularly pretty, but so very calm and peaceful that it contrasted wonderfully with the appalling scene of turmoil and noise we had just left.

Evening was now closing in, and it was time to think of supper, so retracing our steps past the horrible mud-lake, and threading our way cautiously among the craters, where we could hear the boiling mud giving great gulps (*wallops* seems the only descriptive word), we emerged from the dark copse, and found ourselves on the shore of the lake just as the wonderful sunset tints shed their glory on the bare volcanic mountains round us, lending them a beauty not their own.

We found that the Maori lads had pitched our little tent and made all ready for the night, and that some previous traveller had here built a tiny hut, of which the men took possession as their own quarters. Old Mary had cooked our food in a boiling pool

close by, using a flax basket (exactly like those you so commonly see in England) as her cooking-pot. Presently the lads lighted a fire, and formed a picturesque group on the edge of the lake, while we sat listening to the mingled sounds of the night,—the rush of steam from the larger and more distant springs, the bubbling of those close round, and the shrill cries of the wild-fowl.

It had been a day of new sensations, and full of interest from dawn till night. One more new experience remained, on which good old Mary strongly insisted—namely, that we should bathe in a pool of warm liquid mud. It is an artificially-constructed tank on the edge of the lake, to which the Maoris have brought water from a boiling spring by a small conduit. The old woman led the way cautiously along a path beset with dangers even in broad daylight. Finding the bath too hot, she dashed away the surface water, when we found the lower portion comparatively cool, whence we inferred that the water of the sulphureous hot spring must be lighter than that of the lake.

Though not inviting to the eye, we found our mud-bath so enjoyable that it was with the utmost reluctance we at length left it, and plunged into the cold lake to avoid any fear of chill. It was very calm and beautiful in the quiet moonlight. The night air was keen, and we were glad of all our warm wraps, though the steam which stole up through the ground below us must have somewhat warmed the tent.

The Maoris have the greatest faith in mud-baths; and there are certain pools to which they bring their sick from far and near. Coming up the creek to Rotomahana, we passed a native house built over a pool, in which a sick lad lives permanently. He was carried there several months ago, suffering from some aggravated hip-disease, and experienced considerable relief from lying in the water. But having been left there for some hours he very naturally fainted on being removed, so his kindred resolved to keep him permanently in the water, and there he has lain week after week, and will probably remain until he dies.

At early dawn this morning we started in the canoe in search of fresh wonders, leaving the tent and our goods to take care of themselves. We took most of our food with us, but the men, having implicit trust in the honesty of all Maoris, left a piece of mutton, which Mrs Way had given them, to cook itself in a boiling spring, and on their return they found it had been stolen, contrary to all custom.

We rowed first to the little isle Puai, part of which is actually

a small volcano, and the rest soft mud and fissured rock, through which the steam comes hissing and puffing: nevertheless the existence of a small native hut shows that some travellers have selected this dangerous spot for their night-quarters. It certainly has the advantage of commanding a capital view all round; and as we looked back to our own camping-ground we saw the dark mountains veiled by a thousand columns of white steam, which also rose from the surface of the lake, mingling with the wreaths of morning mist. Had time allowed we might have visited fresh groups of geysers, terraces, fumaroles, and solfataras. As it was, we devoted the morning to the pink terraces, which, I think, would be the most fascinating place for camping, though the Maoris prefer our site, as offering superior culinary advantages. But such vulgar considerations would be outweighed by the charm of having perfect command, at all hours, of this, the very queen of all baths, and also by the beauty of the general view of the lake from the hill overlooking this terrace.

This flight of marble basins differs from the others in that they have none of the sharp coral-like stalactites which, while they so greatly enhanced the beauty of the white terraces, do detract somewhat from the comfort of bathing in them, especially to foolish people who, like myself, cannot swim, and so dare not venture into the deeper pools. The pink terrace has no such drawback, its marble being so polished that you may walk barefooted over it, or strike yourself against the curved edges of the basins without the slightest discomfort. Rock and water are alike smooth and warm and pleasant, and you can prolong the delight of the bath to any extent, passing from one pool to another, sometimes receiving a gentle shower as the sparkling drops trickle from the overhanging rim of a pool, perhaps eight or ten feet above you, or else lying still in passive enjoyment, and watching the changing lights that flit across lake and hill, and all the time the kindly water is coating you with a thin film of that silica which makes the bath so smooth and the bather so silky.

I wonder how it would pay to start a "Silica Bath Company" in London? We have certainly enough of flint in the old country, so silica cannot be lacking.

These salmon-coloured terraces are subject to the same variations as their white neighbours. They, too, are formed by a geyser which plays in a basin about sixty feet above the lake. This lovely blue pool is also encircled on three sides by high bare cliffs of many colours. The pool is nearly fifty feet in diameter, and is surrounded

by a marble platform about twenty feet in width, where you can generally walk in safety, but are always liable to a sudden rise and overflow of boiling water. We walked all over the terraces dry-shod this morning, but later in the day they were flooded to the depth of five inches.

I got a large very careful drawing from the ridge overlooking these terraces, with our tent and the white terraces on the other side of the lake. From this point I observed a great cloud of primrose-coloured steam rising from a cone—so returning to the canoe, we rowed round to this spot, and found a large active volcano of the purest sulphur. The whole of the crater is pure yellow, and so are many of the rocks, and also the water of the lake for a considerable distance, making a strange foreground to the vivid blue of the distant lake and sky. In the afternoon we retraced much of the ground we went over yesterday, as of course I am anxious to secure drawings of some of the most striking scenes. One might work here for months and find strange new subjects every day. It certainly is not comfortable sketching-ground, as there are few spots where it would be possible to sit down, and it is no easy matter to hold a large block and work standing, even when a faithful Maori stands by to hold your colour-box. One man, Hémé, is very good and helpful, but the others rather hold aloof, being greatly awed by a number of their countrymen, who have arrived with other canoes, and are making themselves odious.

It seems that, at the instigation of a white man (who, for his own reasons, was anxious to curry favour with the Maoris), they have issued a printed notice, to the effect that no one shall take photographs in this district without paying them a tax of £5 for that privilege. From the first moment of my arrival at Wairoa, my sketching-blocks became a source of keen interest to the natives, who therein scented a possibility of extortion. From that moment they have returned to the attack again and again; and though, happily for me, they consider it useless to attack a stupid woman who cannot understand them, they have never ceased to annoy Mrs Way, whom they consider bound to take their part, and are very angry indeed because she tries to make them understand that water-colour painting and photography are distinct arts. They have decided that I ought, on the contrary, to pay them a larger sum, because the coloured drawings give a truer idea of the place, and must therefore be more valuable. It was quite in vain to suggest that the sight of these pictures would induce fresh visitors to come and spend their much-coveted gold in the district. This only added

fresh fuel to the fire. They said it was certain I should make a fortune by showing those pictures in Auckland, perhaps even in Britain, while they, owners of the place, would have no share in the profits. Of course I was determined not to pay the money, both from a natural aversion to being done, and also because such a precedent would have settled the question, to the detriment of all future sketchers. But you can imagine the annoyance which these noisy talkers have caused us: happily they are all camped at the other side of the lake.

Now I am thoroughly tired, and am going to repeat the mud-bath of last night, and then turn in for a good night's rest.

OLD MISSION STATION, WAIROA, *April* 5.

We were aroused at 4 A.M. by Mr Way, who had ridden all the distance from Wairoa to bring us a loaf of bread, and to announce the unexpected arrival at his house of a party of friends, who purposed joining us in the course of the day. He had waded across the creek at the head of the lake; and having thus provided us with breakfast, he returned to rejoin his party at home.

Being now thoroughly awake, and dear old Mary being equally so, we stole quietly out of the tent and went off to bathe at the white terraces. It was a lovely sunrise; the water was delicious—temptations to linger manifold. Altogether it was a good deal later than we thought, when we returned along the shore, gracefully draped in our plaids and blankets, but by no means fully attired. To my dismay I perceived a large party of Maoris assembled round our cooking-spring, and another canoe lying beside ours. Mary recognised the party as being with two Scotch gentlemen, who had arrived on the other side of the lake the previous day, and with whom we had fraternised by small exchanges of fish and bread, matches, and pepper and salt. Fortunately they had gone off to the mud volcanoes; so having dressed with all speed, we were able on their return to invite them to share our breakfast, just taken out of the hot spring. Their arrival was most opportune; for the Maoris, having talked themselves into great excitement, just then came up *en masse* to inform Mrs Way that I must either at once pay them the coveted £5, or leave the place instantly. They were so very stormy and decided, that it would have been extremely unpleasant had we been alone. Happily the quiet determination of our new friends overawed them, and they fell back grumbling.

After this little episode we fell into home talk, and one of them

asked me if I was any relation to Colonel G. C. of Auchintoul. On hearing I was his sister, he proceeded to tell me how, last year, he was fishing on the Deveron, and, much to his embarrassment, had hooked a seven-pound trout with a very light trout-line, when happily Colonel G. C. espied him, came to the rescue, and gaffed the fish. Strange, was it not, that Bill should have rescued a stranger from a wild fish in Banffshire, and that in the following season the fisher should come to the antipodes, just in time to rescue me from the wild Maoris! Thanks to this seasonable reinforcement, I was able to do a good deal of steady work for several hours.

In the course of the day, the other party of friends arrived, and included two ladies. Arthur Fisher also arrived. The day I left Tauranga he had been obliged to return to Kati Kati on business, which entailed a walk of forty miles. He walked back to Tauranga, which made forty more, before he was able to start on the actual trip to Rotomahana. Unfortunately he arrived so late that he had but a hurried glimpse of all the wonders.

Then we all started to row back here, and all the canoes raced down Lake Tarawara. It was very amusing, and the rowers became immensely excited. Arriving here, our kind hosts insisted on giving up their own room to the other two ladies and me, and we all had a very cheery evening. Early this morning, however, the Maoris returned to the charge with renewed vigour, determined to extort that wretched £5. They tell Mary that my pictures shall never leave the district; that they will seize my portfolios and destroy them all. Mary says it is only bluster, but Mrs Way is not so sure; and as I should have no redress if irreparable damage is done, we have packed the precious sketches securely in the middle of a huge bundle of plaids and pillows, so as to escape attention, and the faithful Hémé will carry it to the coach.

MRS WILSON'S HOTEL, OHINEMUTU, 10 P.M.

Victory! we have triumphed! By good luck a large party of Europeans happened to come up by coach, so we enlisted them, and formed altogether a party of fourteen whites, with the baggage in the middle. Then we marched through the village to the hotel, just as the coach-and-four was ready to start. The foe mustered strong, but apparently thought further attack undesirable, so we drove off in safety. But I confess I am glad to know that we are here on the territory of another tribe, who are not likely to sympathise with the people of Wairoa. Mrs Wilson has welcomed me

back with the cordiality of an old friend, as have all the residents and visitors in the house—kind, hearty people.

AUCKLAND, *Feb.* 8.

Before daybreak the following morning I was out sketching the steaming graveyard in the Old Pah; and after a very early breakfast started by coach for Tauranga, leaving the little village still shrouded in thick clouds of white steam, which sparkled in dewy beads on the webs of myriads of gossamer spiders. A light fire had passed over the ferny hills—so light that the skeletons of the brackens were left standing; and it seemed as if each branch of scorched fern, far as the eye could reach, was veiled with one of these fairy webs. Arriving at Tauranga, I found that kind Mrs Edgecumbe had, with her own hands, prepared a capital tea-dinner for me, her maid having, according to colonial custom, gone off suddenly, leaving her quite alone on her own resources, with four children to look after!

An hour later I embarked in the coasting-steamer, where, much to my delight, I found Mrs Ferguson coming up from her remote station to see her sweet little daughter, who for the present is left in Auckland. We spent the night together, lying on a sky-light, tucked in beneath a pile of blankets, by the good old Scotch captain, who had previously administered to us a most comfortable glass of real hot toddy! It proved a dirty night of storm and rain; but we were quite cosy, and Ella filled me with amazement by accounts of the rides which she constantly has to do alone, often in the dark, to get nails or anything else required by the builders of her future home, and of the dangerous fords she has to cross, sometimes swimming her horse. She makes very light of all the hardships of her tent-life, which include cooking and baking for the party. It is wonderful what fragile and delicate ladies can do when they resolve to face colonial life!

We arrived here safely, and I found Lady Gordon and the children and Colonel Pratt all ready for our return to Fiji, on board the Zealandia, which sails next Thursday. Mr Maudslay is expected from Wellington, just in time to accompany us. We all feel much better for our trip here: and though I greatly regret having seen nothing of the Southern Isle, we are not sorry to be going back to our island home. . . . It is rather aggravating, both to Lady Gordon and myself, that every one we meet insists on congratulating us on our very fortunate investments in the lucky Moanatairi mine. It is quite useless for us to assert that

we only wish we had had such good luck, but that, unfortunately, the idea never entered our minds. The fact of my having been there is quite sufficient, and we are now looked upon as millionaires! We only wish it had been true! Poor Fiji stands greatly in need of such. Good-bye.—Your loving sister.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FIJIAN RIVERS—SAMOAN ENVOYS—DEATH OF A TRUE APOSTLE—A REVIVAL—MAKING A RACE-COURSE—MISSION TO NEW BRITAIN.

SUVA, VITI LEVU, FIJI. *March* 2C, 1877.

MY DEAR NELL,—Once more we are safely back in the isles. We came from Auckland in the Zealandia—a noble vessel, upwards of 3200 tons. You can imagine how horrible was the change when she dropped us at Khandavu, and we found only the Barb, a wretched little ketch of about 35 tons (the best vessel poor Fiji had to send), and which was first to bring us here, and was then to return to take the other passengers and the mails to Levuka. We might well say "bad is the best," for this, which at present is *the* Government ship, has no accommodation of any sort for ladies.

Fortunately we landed on a lovely day, and quite enjoyed our row up the harbour, whence we walked across the isthmus to the opposite bay, where the Barb was anchored. It is a lovely coast, with white sand and many shells, and thickly fringed with palms. We lunched on the shore, and then embarked. We had hardly set sail when it commenced to rain heavily. The tiny cabin was so stuffy that it seemed hard enough to condemn even the children to stay in it. They and their nurse had a miserable night of sickness. For ourselves, we considered a drenching to be the lesser evil of the two, so when night came on, we lay down on the deck with no awning and the rain pouring, while gusts of wind periodically blew our umbrellas inside out. The gentlemen, saturated and miserable, did their best to be cheery, and occasionally came round to offer us creature comfort in the way of bits of chocolate and biscuit, or a very needful nip of brandy or claret. So the long night wore through. At daybreak we were off Suva, but the

mist was so dense that it was nearly noon before we could distinguish the passage through the coral reef, and run into harbour. You can imagine how glad we were to see the barge, and the gig with the nice Fijian boatmen, all so pleased to welcome us back; and soon we were comfortably housed in Mrs Joski's pleasant home. (Nasova is, as usual, undergoing re-thatching.)

Having landed us, the Barb returned to Khandavu to fetch the mails and the other passengers (including two ladies and a baby). Though the accommodation there was wretched enough, it must have been Paradise compared with what followed. For five days and nights they lay becalmed in pouring rain ere they reached Levuka! Such are the pleasures of travelling in Fiji! And yet its beauty atones for many discomforts; and the lovely days, when they do come, make up for all the rainy ones. And I do feel so glad once more to see canoes with quaint sails, and graceful living bronzes with artistic drapery. What a country this would be for an artist studying figure painting! The people love to see themselves on paper, and will sit as still as a rock for hours to be sketched. It is lamentable that such good models should be wasted.

We had only been here one day when a messenger came from Nasova to say that a vessel had arrived from Samoa bringing a deputation of chiefs, representing the various conflicting parties there, who had come to discuss the subject of British protection, and to see for themselves how it is working in Fiji. So Sir Arthur, escorted by Mr Maudslay, went off to receive them.

I think I have already told you that this is the spot which the Home Government has just selected as the site of the future capital. Great is the howl of dismay raised by the householders of Levuka at the idea of the change; but there is no immediate prospect of a serious migration from there, for as yet there are only four houses here. From this verandah we have a lovely view of the harbour and the beautiful mountain-ranges, seen through festoons of large-leaved *granadilla*, the great passion-flower, which at present is loaded with ripe fruit as big as a small pumpkin. These we eat with milk and sugar, and find them excellent. We have had some charming expeditions by boat and canoe, the latter being available in many places where we cannot take the boats.

Nothing can exceed the loveliness of some of the many rivers which flow into Suva harbour, none too wide to admit of full enjoyment of the rich tropical foliage which clothes their banks, overhanging the stream, and sometimes mirrored on the clear

waters. Delicate and beautiful creepers of every conceivable pattern, assuming forms more or less akin to our own Virginian creeper, convolvulus, and ash, only in infinite variety and luxuriance, blend their foliage one with another in inextricable confusion, and together overspread the tall trees, thence falling in long veils as of dripping leaves. Verily these green things of the earth are things of beauty. Loveliest of all is a climbing fern which the natives call the *Wa kolou*, or god fern,[1] and with which they make garlands either for their own shoulders, or to twine round the ridge-pole of their houses. And nowhere have I seen tree-ferns in greater abundance than here. You come upon banks so densely clothed with them that you distinguish no other form. Still it is hard to get reconciled to the wholesale destruction of so much beauty, which results from the use of the stem for ordinary purposes, such as making fences and supports for the interior of houses. Multitudes of wild duck haunt these quiet streams, and tantalise the sportsman by falling wounded, with just life enough to dive; and if only they can reach the tangled roots of the mangrove, they are never seen again.

One day Adolphe Joski rowed me up the lovely Tama Vua river to see a village perched on a high crag. We landed, and climbed up a rock-stair, which was like the stairs of a dozen cathedral towers heaped one above the other, and as slippery as ice—rather a difficult approach to one's home! Yet in this eyrie we found several families with their little ones, apparently perfectly content with their quarters. According to custom, the graves of the village are on a point still more difficult of access, in order that they may be safe from the desecrating hands of foes. Of course, the position of both village and graves tells of the days of war and cannibalism. Already some of the people have come down to a more convenient level; and we halted at a village near the river, and rested in the house of a fine old chief, whose fireplace and great black cooking-pots I sketched, while his graceful daughter sat by, watching my work, and peeling ripe delicious oranges, with which she fed me, while my companion talked to the old chief.

Another day we all went to a neighbouring village to see Andi Clara, who is the nicest Fijian lady we know, and has such a pretty new brown baby. Last year's baby has grown quite beautiful. It is Lady Gordon's godchild, and called after her, Andi Racheli.[2] I halted that afternoon, to sketch in the sugar-cane fields; but the position proved bad for the arts, as my escort never ceased peeling

[1] Lygodium reticulatum. [2] Lady Rachel.

canes, and administering small juicy pieces, which, though irresistible, were decidedly sticky.

One day last week I started alone at daybreak to sketch a group of beautiful peaks; some points in the range are upwards of 4500 feet in height: my path lay through the deserted sugar-fields, where the cane is now left to run wild. Though useless for commerce, it is sufficiently luxuriant to reach far above my head, and that morning I found it dripping from the previous night's rain. Of course I was soon soaked, and had enough to do to keep my paper dry. Following a faint old native track, I got into a glen full of dark *eevie* trees (the Fijian chestnut tree). I pushed on, passing occasional patches of cultivation, yam and *taro*, thinking that where these were, I must find my way all right. Then I came to a limpid stream, overshadowed by a shaddock-tree, loaded with great ripe fruit, like huge oranges, pink inside; so I rested and ate shaddock, and then started afresh. Soon I lost all trace of the track, and I could scarcely force my way through the dense reedy grass, which is eight or ten feet high, and all matted with convolvulus. Whichever way I turned, up hill or down, it was all the same weary waste of tall reeds; and if by chance I found an old *taro* patch, there remained no sign of any path. At last I concluded that I was really lost, and shouted till I was tired, hoping that some villager might have come to dig his yams; but no voice answered. Then I bethought me if only I could strike the glen again, I could scramble along in the bed of the stream till I hit the track; and at last I happily did so, and got home pretty well tired out, as you can imagine.

BAU, *April* 29, 1877.

After ten days at Suva it was decided that the whole party should return to headquarters at Nasova without waiting for the completion of the thatching, though it does cause a confusion and a hubbub all about the place. So we started—ourselves in a large new boat, the Abbeys in the gig, a third boat with luggage and servants, towing the Baron's canoe, and two beautiful cutters (belonging to Mr Maudslay and Captain Knollys) bringing the rest of the household goods. We were thus quite a fleet. Five hours' sail brought us to Rewa, where we went to see the wife of the chief, Andi Tartilia, who had a small daughter last week. This atom is called "The Lightning of Heaven." It was handed to me on a tiny mat, very finely woven, and just its own size. It is against all Fijian custom that the child of a chief should leave

nursing-arms for the first ten days, so many ladies of rank assemble and relieve guard. Five were sitting together, cuddled up in a huge piece of *tappa*, which was considered necessary to keep the baby warm. The mother lay close to the fireplace, in the middle of the floor, with a blazing fire, and an immense square of handsome *tappa* thrown over her, covering a space of many yards. This with a thermometer at about 85°!

We came here that same evening, and received our usual cordial welcome from Mr and Mrs Langham. Lady Gordon had arranged to proceed to Nasova the next day, but I gladly accepted an invitation to stay here a few days. I was all the better pleased to do so, as the party of Samoan chiefs having had their interview with the Governor regarding British protection, have been sent here for further information from the native chiefs, and of course their reception by the Vuni Valu and his people is a matter of great interest. The chiefs are representatives of the three parties who have been contending for mastery in Samoa, and who now crave the help of the British lion in settling their difficulties. Two of the party talk excellent English, and all are most intelligent. The two ladies are pretty, graceful girls.

A curious piece of old Fijian etiquette was observed on their arrival. The little vessel which brought them from Ovalau had anchored at Bau the night we arrived here. Of course with ten Samoan gentlemen and two ladies on board so small a craft, the pleasure of getting ashore would have been very great. But this could not be dreamt of. Not till the following morning, when the Vuni Valu sent messengers to *swim* off to them, with whales' teeth and other gifts, and invite them to land, could they do so. Then they came ashore in great state, all very handsome chief-like men, dressed in heavy drapery of the thickest hand-painted *tappa*. They were received by the Fijian chiefs, and conducted to Thakombau's house, where there was a great ceremonial drinking of yangona.

In the evening we went to call in due form on the Samoan ladies, and found them at the house of the king's son, Ratu Timothy, and his pretty Tongan wife. Of course the great wooden yangona-bowl occupied a central position, and the party lay in picturesque groups on the mats all round. To-morrow they are all to be taken an expedition up the Rewa, to show them something of the country, the sugar-mills, &c.

This evening I have been a lovely expedition with Mr Langham, up one of the beautiful little rivers on the mainland, to the village of Na Ooa Ooa. The stream gradually narrowed as we ascended,

and we glided on beneath overhanging trees, in and out between old mangroves, which dropped their strange weird roots into the stream from a height of fully twenty feet. As we returned late in the evening to the river's mouth, the clouds on the horizon were fiery as if at sunset, and the red moon rose from the sea like a ball of molten gold, casting long gleaming reflections on the still waters.

Late as it was, on our return we went to see dear old Joeli Mbulu, the noble old Tongan minister of whom I have often spoken to you. Alas! his work is wellnigh finished. He is greatly changed this week—wasted to a shadow; but his face is perhaps more beautiful than ever, from its sweetness of expression and the bright look which at times lights it up,—just like some grand old apostle nearing his rest. He is very tall and stately, with a halo of white hair and long grey beard. His skin is very fair, like that of all the Tongans and Samoans. Generally he wears only his long white waist-cloth, almost to the feet, which are bare, and folds of native cloth round his loins. He has been a Christian teacher in Fiji for the last thirty years—that is, from the beginning—amid noise and tumult of war, and in the thick of all the devilry of cannibalism. He has been the old king's special teacher, —and many a difficult day he has had with him and all his handsome, strong-willed sons and daughters. They are all very much attached to him; and some of them are generally with him now, fanning or just watching beside him.

There is no doubt that his magnificent physical development has tended to increase his ascendancy over a race which naturally looks up to one whose stature at once proclaims him to be *tamata ndina* (a man indeed). That such he is, is testified by the deep scars on one arm, which tell of such a triumph, and such power of endurance, as no Fijian living can boast of.

Many years ago, he had a dream about an encounter with a shark. This so haunted him, that for many days he refused to swim, as was his wont, in the deep water near the mouth of the river. At length, yielding to the persuasions of other bold swimmers, he ventured in, and was far ahead of his companions, when suddenly he beheld the monster of his dream coming straight towards him. There was not a moment for hesitation. As the cruel jaws opened, he plunged his arm down the throat of the shark, and, grasping its tongue by the root, held it firmly, while with the other arm he swam towards the shore, dragging the brute after him. As he reached the bank he fell down in a dead faint from exhaustion

and loss of blood; but his wounds were speedily dressed, and the arm recovered almost all its power.

BAU, *May* 6, 1877.

The Samoan party returned last Thursday, much pleased with all they have seen. Next day the annual "missionary meeting" was held here, when, as you know, the people of the district assemble to bring their contributions for the support of the mission, and each village exhibits its favourite dance. On this occasion, one descriptive of catching a hundred fish had been specially ordered for the amusement of the Samoans, and was particularly good, as was also a fan dance. Then the ladies of Bau, headed by the old queen and her daughter, and all the young ladies of noble birth, sang a very fine *méké*, with appropriate stately gestures; and very well they looked,—all alike wearing the little white jacket, with low neck and short sleeves, and a fringe of bright yellow banana-leaf, torn into strips, round the waist, over their skirts of native cloth.

As a study of colour, I specially noted one stalwart fellow wearing a garland of these golden leaves thrown over his madder-brown shoulders, and a gauzy film of sienna-coloured smoked *tappa* over his hair, and folds of creamy-brown *tappa* round the waist. He stood in relief against a clear blue sky—a study for an artist.

On the following day, the Vuni Valu had ordered the people of four towns on the mainland to come over and perform a great *méké* in honour of his guests, assembling as usual on the *rara*—*i.e.*, the village green. They came, very elaborately dressed. First two hundred marched up, one hundred bringing rolled-up mats, and one hundred bearing *taro*, to be laid as offerings at the strangers' feet. Other dancers brought sugar-canes and divers gifts. The first two hundred then stood up in double line facing us, one line constantly advancing and retreating under the arms of the others. This was exceedingly graceful. Their dress was almost uniform, most having very handsome large neck ornaments of carved shell. The measured hand-clapping was so regular that it sounded like one pair of hands each time.

Then came a second company, bearing gifts of yams and pottery, which they added to the first heap. They also performed a very graceful dance like an elaborate ballet. This done, Thakombau formally presented the property to the Samoans, whose principal attendants proceeded to *count the amount given*, and return thanks for so many articles. Then two of the party arose (they were all dressed in kilts of rich brown native cloth, with necklaces of large

red berries and green leaves). These two then performed an extraordinary dance, which greatly astonished the Fijians. They capered wildly round and round the *rara* like a pair of spinning-tops, twirling a club round their head, and springing into the air in most wonderful style,—throwing the club up and catching it again. The Vuni Valu, who was looking on with intense interest, recognised this ceremony as an ancient Fijian form of accepting an offering.

These Samoans are very handsome men, and their skin is a clear olive colour. In dancing so energetically, their kilts of native cloth very naturally became disarranged, and revealed complete knee-breeches of the most elaborate close tattooing. I wonder whether the *woad* of our own ancestors was as artistically put on!

They then proceeded to touch each offering, and next touched the crown of their head in token of acceptance. One of their party now made a speech, which their interpreter repeated to the Vuni Valu, after which they divided the spoil—apportioning gifts of food to the mission and to each house of note in Bau, and reserving the mats and pottery as their own share. Of course their daily food is given to them ready cooked.

After the dances they came up to tea here, sitting at the table in most orthodox style, and were much amused looking at coloured stereoscopes. They were also delighted because a lady who is staying here played all the liveliest tunes she possibly could induce the harmonium to give forth; and they joined in singing "Home, sweet Home," and similar old airs, which seemed familiar to them, —and, moreover, they sang them quite in tune, which I cannot say for most Fijians.

In the evening we were all invited to join the party at the old king's house. While waiting our summons we sat in the clear moonlight under the great Mbaka trees among the huge grey stones, which were formerly the foundation of the principal heathen temple, and the scene of many a bloody sacrifice. Now all was still and peaceful; for it was the hour of evening prayer, and each family was assembled in its own home for a few moments of quiet worship. Close by was the house in which lay dear old Joeli, fast passing away from the scene in which he has so steadfastly worked to bring about this great change.

After a while the old chief sent to fetch us. We found him and his family seated on the mats in a semicircle—his guests in another semicircle facing him, and all the retainers crouching round. We were placed on mats at the upper end and the great wooden yan-

gona-bowl stood opposite. This night the nectar was to be brewed by the Samoans, and we watched with interest to see wherein their customs in preparing their national drink differed from those of Fiji. In the first place, there were no songs during the process of chewing, which I regretted, as I delight in the wild measured chants which invariably accompany the yangona-brewing of Fiji, where there are special songs and distinct varieties of hand-clapping for each stage of the proceeding. Here, too, no woman touches the bowl.

The Samoan girls not only helped in chewing, but one of them strained the mixture in the great wooden bowl through the hybiscus fibre, and most gracefully she did it. She had put off her heavy necklace of large scarlet berries, and wore only a white *sulu* with fringe of green leaves, and a scarlet hybiscus in her rich sienna hair. It was a pretty picture. But the old king could scarcely conceal his contempt at the idea of seeing a woman deputed to such an office. It was not *vaka Viti,* he said—that is, not according to Fijian custom. A Samoan attendant, wearing only a *liku,* or kilt fringe of green leaves, carried round the cocoa-nut cup which the girl filled for each drinker, while a herald proclaimed the name of each in his social order. The name of a very high chief was whispered almost inaudibly, while that of his messenger was shouted. There was none of the measured hand-clapping so essential in Fiji while a chief is drinking, and when he has finished. In Samoa only the drinker himself claps his hands on returning the cup, which he hands back, instead of skimming it across the mat, *vaka Viti.*

The chiefs had already held a great discussion on the state of affairs in their respective countries, and their inability to protect themselves against the wicked machinations of scheming white men of all nations, without the aid of some civilised Government. Much to our satisfaction, therefore, the old king, weary of talking business, asked the Samoans to let him see one of their dances. They at once consented; and, remarking that the highest chief was the best dancer, four of them agreed to dance, while the others sang and played a sort of accompaniment by clapping hands. At first the four sat on the ground, going through violent action of the arms, and hand-clapping all over their own bodies. They then sprang to their feet and danced a sort of wild Highland fling. Finally, they made most hideous faces at one another, and we agreed it must be a fragment of some old devil-dance. Afterwards they showed us a quieter dance, but it was utterly lacking in the grace of the Fijian *mékés.* The songs were very pretty; some re-

minded me of wild Gaelic airs, and they were sung in perfect tune, with good seconds.

It was nearly midnight when we left the old king's house; and hearing that a canoe had arrived from Levuka, we went to the Roko's house to get our letters. Lady Gordon had sent a parcel of jujubes and acid drops for dear old Joeli, which we took to him. The noble face lighted up as we entered, and he greeted us as was his wont—with holy and loving words. He was perfectly calm, and the grand steadfast mind clear as ever; but it is evident that he is nearing his rest.

To-day it is very hot; there is not a breath stirring. The sea is perfectly calm, and reflects every delicate cloud and distant isle. A canoe starts at daybreak, and will take this letter. So good-bye.

BAU, *May* 7, 1877.

Last night there was great wailing and lamentation in Bau, for soon after midnight Joeli passed away, and died nobly as he had lived. He was quite conscious to the very last, and the expression of the grand old face was simply beautiful—so radiant, as of one without a shadow of doubt concerning the Home he was so near. No man ever more truly earned the right to say, "I have fought a good fight—I have kept the faith;" and none ever was more truly humble. If ever the crown of righteousness is awarded by a righteous Judge to His true and faithful servants, assuredly Joeli will not fail to stand in that blessed company.

This morning we went to look once more on the face we all loved so truly. He looked grand in death as in life, lying on a square of rich black-brown *tappa*, his head pillowed on a large roll of native cloth, his beautiful white hair thrown back as a halo, and his long white beard adding to his patriarchal beauty. Over his feet were thrown two beautifully fine Samoan mats. His poor widow Ekkesa, his pretty grand-daughter, and many other women, and students from the college, were all weeping bitterly, as those who had lost their wise and loving counsellor and guide. The king and all his family also mourn sorely, for Joeli has ever been their true and faithful friend and minister; and many a time has he vainly pleaded with the old chief in the long years ere he could be brought to abandon the vile customs of heathenism. All through Joeli's illness I have rarely entered the house without finding some member of Thakombau's family sitting by him, watching his sleep, or fanning him.

According to native custom, the costly Samoan mats and native cloth that lay beneath him and over his feet were buried with him; and had the funeral been simply *vaka Viti*, the body should only have been wrapped in many Fijian mats. But Thakombau, anxious to do all honour to his old friend, wished that he should be buried in a coffin. So as there chanced to be a half-caste carpenter on the island building a boat, he made a coffin with some planks of red cedar wood. He did not get the order till 10 A.M., and the funeral was to start at 3 P.M. Just an hour beforehand it was brought to the mission to be lined and covered, in which work I assisted, and so gained my first experience of undertaker's business.

The place of burial was a beautiful site near an old church on the neighbouring isle of Viwa. The funeral procession was a very touching one. One large canoe carried the dead and the chief mourners. The old king and his three stalwart sons and two daughters, as also Andi Eleanor, Tui Thakow's real wife, followed in others; and nearly all the people of Bau, and from many neighbouring villages, came in canoes and boats, making a very great procession. All the principal mourners, including the royal family, wore a piece of coarse old matting, all frayed out, in token of mourning. It is worn round the waist, over the ordinary dress. We made a beautiful great wreath of white jessamine and blue-grey flowers, with an outer wreath of scarlet leaves, and this we laid on the coffin. The grave was upwards of a mile from the shore; and about twenty young teachers—fine young fellows—took it by turns to carry the coffin up a steep hill, and through green forest-glades, to the place of rest. Part of our beautiful funeral service was repeated in the rich Fijian tongue (which to my ear always resembles Italian); and then Joeli was laid beside his old friend and teacher, the Rev. John Hunt, one of the early Wesleyan missionaries, with whom he had shared many an anxious day, and who died here in 1848, at the early age of thirty-six.

I told you about Mr Hunt commencing the mission at Somo Somo. For the last six years of his busy life of earnest work he lived chiefly on this island, where he had established his printing-press; and in the intervals of travelling from isle to isle, in danger, storm, and privation—teaching the people and superintending the schools—he found time to train a large number of native agents, and also to produce and print an admirable translation of the New Testament. If you think of the amount of labour represented in acquiring so very elaborate a language by ear, reducing it to writing, and then translating and printing so large a book,

with such rude appliances, and so little help, you will surely conclude that this of itself would have been no light work for one man to undertake. So it was no wonder that this over-willing spirit should have outworn the frail body.

He had his reward in seeing a marvellous change pass over his cannibal neighbours at Viwa. Here (where, five years before, one of the most horribly treacherous massacres which ever disgraced Fiji had been perpetrated, and the bodies of upwards of a hundred poor fishermen deliberately murdered for the ovens of Bau, lay strewn all round the mission premises, where Mr Cross and his family, with the native teachers, had assembled, horror-stricken, but utterly powerless to stay the butchery), Mr Hunt records the story of a general awakening, before which all such revival meetings as we have heard of elsewhere seem pale and colourless. He had instituted special prayer-meetings (penitent meetings they were called) on Saturday evenings, and was struck by the exceeding earnestness which seemed to prevail amongst all present. This was the commencement of a series of meetings held night and morning in almost every house, when, like the men of Nineveh of old, these people, with one accord, humbled themselves in the dust, crying for mercy, with one heart and one voice. These fierce murderers and cannibals seemed suddenly to realise the awfulness of their guilt, and were overwhelmed by the sense of their own wickedness. In deepest contrition they knelt before the God of the Christians, weeping and wailing piteously, pleading for forgiveness, and continuing in such agony of prayer that many of these men—some of them the worst cannibals in Fiji—fainted from sheer exhaustion, and no sooner recovered consciousness than they again began to agonise in prayer till they again became insensible. They had to be literally forced to take necessary food. Those who heard their cry noted its strong earnest sense. They simply bewailed their past wickedness, and implored God's mercy. This continued for several days, during which business, sleep, and food were almost entirely neglected. But the cry of the people was heard and answered, and soon a strange new peace—the peace that passeth understanding—seemed to pervade the isle. The people that had hitherto sat in darkness now saw a great light, and those who hitherto had been noted only for their evil deeds now became gentle and teachable, and began to lead simple, consistent, Christian lives. Truly, if such a change as this were the sole result wrought by the mission, the lives of Cross, Hunt, Hazlewood, Polglaze, and Baker were not laid down in vain, when

one by one they died at their posts from sheer over-work. At least the first four did so. Mr Baker was murdered, as I mentioned in writing from Viti Levu.

We lingered on the beautiful and now peaceful isle of Viwa for some hours, and then returned through the forest and over the star-lit sea, and so back to the landing-place, at which Joeli had so often met and welcomed us; and up the steep steps leading to the mission, past the site of the horrid ovens, where he had so often stood to rebuke the cruel rites that were there enacted. Altogether it has been a very sad day, and the funeral was one of the most pathetic and touching scenes you can imagine.

NASOVA, *May* 9, 1877.

Yesterday morning I started very early with Mr Langham to visit Moturiki, a rich beautiful island with lovely foliage. Our destination was a village called Niu Mbasanga, meaning the "two-headed cocoa-nut," which we there saw, and which is quite as great a deformity and wonder as a two-headed giant would be. I have only heard of one other palm-tree which has indulged in any freak of growth: that other is on the isle of Ngau, where five stems are said to spring from one root.

We found the people of seven villages assembled for their annual "missionary meeting." There was the usual conference with the teachers about church matters, and the usual festive manner of presenting the annual offerings for the mission, the people adorned with the accustomed gay wreaths of bright leaves, and dancing joyously as is their wont. They looked happy and picturesque. The dances were excellent, and very varied. Even now, I constantly see something new to me. Yesterday most of the dancers carried huge fans, and were dressed in floating folds of native cloth, with kilt fringe of many-coloured ribbons of *pandanus*-leaf, also floating lightly round them. You cannot think how strange it is to see all the action and grouping of most admirable ballets, with the surroundings of a Fijian village—thatched houses, fine old trees, palms, a few big pigs and a multitude of little pigs roaming at large, and crowds of gentlest savages looking on. We rested at the house of Ratu Ben, a good-looking chief, who urged us to remain; but we were obliged to push on, and sleep at a village further along the coast, as it was necessary to cross the only passage through the reef at high tide, which was at midnight. It was sunset ere we could leave the first village, and of course we

were not expected at the next; but the people soon turned out to meet us, and made torches of dry cocoa-palm leaves to light us through the wood. This is always a pretty sight, as the red gleams fall on great plantain or palm leaves, and ferns of every size and shape. As usual, we took possession of one end of the teacher's house, and the student-boatmen and their friends had mats at the other end. Early this morning we explored the village, which is pretty, and overshadowed by great *eevie* trees. Then we walked a mile along the shore to the boat, and started to row and sail by turns, keeping inside the main reef all the way. It was a lovely day for a sail, but it was only occasionally that we could venture to hoist one, as the beautiful, but horribly dangerous, coral-patches are very numerous. How you would enjoy such an expedition, looking down at the endless wonders of the corals, and fishes of all hues; and all this as you glide along in perfectly smooth water, inside the great reef, where the white breakers form a wall of dazzling surf—and how they do boom and roar!

We got here at noon, and found all well, except Sir Arthur, who is laid up with a very painful knee: this is particularly awkward just now, as the Samoan party have arrived, and have to be formally received. There is to be a great Fijian *méké* in their honour; and the native soldiers are now hard at work practising their dances on the green, which greatly distracts my attention, as I cannot resist watching them.

The house has just been rethatched, so it is full of caterpillars; but as there are no biting creatures in all Fiji (except mosquitoes and sand-flies, and a rare centipede), we do not mind the innocent caterpillars. But the thatchers have destroyed all the beautiful festoons of climbing plants which we had trained so carefully over the pillars and verandah before our windows.

There goes the dressing *lali*—*i.e.*, a fine deep-toned wooden drum—which is our Fijian substitute for dressing and dinner gong, so I must stop writing. You cannot think how handsome the dining-room now looks. You know it was built as a council-chamber for the old king. Now it is adorned with most artistically-arranged trophies of spears, clubs, bowls, and all Fijian art-work, with richly-designed native cloth as drapery. So everything is well in keeping. Good-bye.

NASOVA, *May* 25.

There has been a wonderful outburst of gaiety, chiefly due to the presence of H.M.S. Sapphire, which has given an unwonted impetus

to cricket-matches, lawn-tennis, canoe-races, yacht-races, and all such small amusements as the place affords. But the excitement culminated yesterday, when, in honour of the Queen's birthday, Levuka had her first race-meeting!—real races! If only you could see the island, you would understand the wonder, especially if you recollect that, when we landed here eighteen months ago, Captain Olive and the butcher owned the only two horses on Ovalau; and Sir Arthur brought out two ponies. As the only place where these could be used was the rough path, about one mile long, between Nasova and Levuka, and the little break-neck paths leading to different private houses, there seemed small reason to import more. It has been done, however, and straightway the Anglo-Saxon colony demanded a race-course. The question was where it could be made; for it was difficult to find a bit of level ground, large enough even for cricket. At last, however, a place has been found, seven miles down the coast, where, by going several times round the course, a fair distance may be run. It has been necessary, however, to wage incessant war against the crabs, which perforate the ground in every direction, and make it extremely dangerous for horses. Notwithstanding all drawbacks, there were half-a-dozen races, and three or four horses or ponies entered for each. The jockeys had colours; and Levuka's first races were most amusing, and voted a great success. The race-course in itself was extremely pretty, being situated on the sea-shore, at the entrance to a fine wooded gorge between high hills. Nearly a hundred boats, cutters and canoes, had arrived from Levuka and along the coast; and Europeans and Fijians formed picturesque groups beneath the cocoa palms and other trees, while a grand stand had been erected for the *élite*. The day was faultless, as beseemed the Queen's birthday,—and the scene was altogether very pretty, and quite a novel experience for Fiji.

On our way back we went to tea on board the Sapphire, and then there was a large official dinner here, to about fifty people. To-morrow there is to be a regatta of all the boats and cutters belonging to the place, or to the ships in harbour, ending with a great native canoe race. It is sure to be a very pretty sight. We are to lunch on board H.M.S. Reynard, and then go to five o'clock tea on board H.M.S. Sapphire.

May 30.

Last night Lady Gordon and I went to dine with Mr Mitchell and Mr Eyre, who are living in a purely Fijian house in the native

village. They gave us excellent soup, made of young *taro* leaves boiled in sea-water, with the cream of squeezed cocoa-nut, prawns boiled and curried with cocoa-nut, pigeons, Fiji puddings, and yams and *taro* served on banana leaves.

Afterwards we sat at the door, watching the full moon rise from the sea, framed by groups of palm-trees; then we walked up to the quiet little cemetery on the hill, where the reedy grasses, shivering in the night-wind, seemed like spirit-voices, whispering of those who there rest in peace.

June 1.

Yesterday we dined on board H.M.S. Sapphire. It savoured of Fiji, that on going down to the pier we found it under repair, and we had to climb down to the boat as best we could. Lady Gordon was carried in her chair to another pier at some distance, to find that also under repair; so she had to climb down after all, and of course we were unpunctual in consequence. The dinner was most *récherché* (larks stuffed with truffles, &c.), and perfect in every detail, as are also Captain Murray's lovely cabins. As we rowed back by moonlight the ship burnt blue lights, displaying herself to great advantage.

June 22, 1877.

This morning I went with Baron von Hügel to breakfast on board the mission brig, John Wesley, with the Rev. —— and Mrs Brown, who are just about to sail for New Britain, taking with them a party of Fijian teachers to reinforce those already settled there. This mission to New Britain and New Zealand is purely Fijian—Mr Brown being the only white man connected with it. At the present moment, when the colonisation of New Guinea is a subject under so much discussion, and the desperate character of its cannibal people acknowledged to be an obstacle which even the thirst for gold does not make men willing to face, it certainly is interesting to know that from Fiji (which has itself so recently received the light of Christianity) has gone forth the first effort which sooner or later will inevitably result in the civilising of these wild tribes; and, to look at it from a mercantile point of view, will open the door first to traders, and then to permanent settlers.

It was, I think, in June 1875 that the idea of this mission was first suggested; and that Mr Brown, after fully explaining to all the native teachers the imminent dangers it involved, asked if there were any among them who would volunteer for the work. The

response was most cordial; and nine brave determined men (seven of whom were married, and their wives true helpmeets in this great work) announced their wish to undertake it. On hearing of this, the English Consul considered it his duty to summon these teachers, and lay before them, in glowing colours, the dangers they were about to incur from climate and cannibals, and the almost inevitable fate that awaited them should they persist in their rash determination.

They replied that they had counted the cost, and were ready to accept all risks. One acting as spokesman for all, said: "We are all of one mind. We know what those islands are. We have given ourselves to this work. If we get killed, well; if we live, well. We have had everything explained to us, and know the danger. We are willing to go." They added that all dangers had been fully set before them by the missionaries, and that they had determined to go, because of their own wish to make known the Gospel of Christ to the people of other isles. Throughout the Fijian Isles the native teachers receive a salary of £10 a-year, and are supplied with food by their scholars. These men resigned all claim to any definite salary. They gave themselves as volunteers, without even the certainty of daily bread, resolved to face whatever hardships might lie before them.

With something more than the zeal of the early saints (for we never hear that they went to live amongst cannibals), this band of brave men set sail in this same mission-brig, the John Wesley.[1] Mr Brown had left his wife and children in New Zealand; and I doubt if he was able to communicate once with them during the two years of his absence. He has now returned to announce that the mission is fairly established. He has been to New Zealand to

[1] News has recently been received that four of these native teachers have been treacherously murdered and eaten by the cannibal people of the Duke of York Island, on which they, with their wives and little ones, had settled in the hope of forming a separate mission. The murderers threatened also to kill and eat the widows and orphans, and urged the natives of New Britain likewise to dispose of their teachers, and especially of the white missionary. The latter, being a Christian of the muscular type, deemed it wise, once for all, to teach these murderers that the shedding of blood involves punishment in kind; so mustering his little band of Fijian and Samoan catechists, he crossed over to the offending isle, rescued the widows and orphans, and routed the horde of savages, who received a somewhat severe lesson on this occasion. These distressing tidings reached Fiji just as a fresh detachment of teachers was about to start for New Britain. Their determination was in no degree shaken. One of them expressed the feeling of all when he said: "If the people of New Britain kill and eat my body, I shall go to a place where there is no more pain or death; it is all right." One of the wives was asked whether she still intended to accompany her husband to a scene of so great danger; she replied: "I am like the outrigger of a canoe—where the canoe goes, there you will surely find the outrigger!" Brave helpmeets these!

see his family; and his wife, being a brave little woman, and of one mind with her husband, has resolved to return with him. So they have placed their elder children at school, and are taking only one baby with them; and now they have returned to Fiji to enlist fresh volunteers, and a few days hence they will quietly sail away on their errand of mercy. And though their departure from here will hardly excite a passing comment, there is small doubt that their work will leave an enduring mark on the future history of the Pacific Isles. Mr Brown gave us many most interesting details of all he had seen in New Britain, and of the country and people —none of which I have time to tell you, as the mail closes to-day. Good-bye.

NASOVA, *June* 25, 1877.

DEAR JEAN,—I have just returned from a pleasant three days' expedition to the island of Wakaya, which is so near here that the wonder is why we have not been there long ago. It is the property of the late American Consul, Dr Brewer, and is one of the best examples of a fairly prosperous estate. Dr Brewer having most kindly placed his comfortable house at our disposal for some days, Captain Stewart, R.E., made arrangements to take another lady and myself across in his little yacht. We had a favouring breeze, and a rough but rapid passage, and arrived in such good time that we were able to start at once to climb a rocky hill, on the summit of which formerly stood a fortified town, which is the chief point of historic interest on the isle. For there was a deadly feud between the people of Wakaya and those of Ovalau, which resulted in the total extermination of the former, who finally took refuge in this stronghold, until, driven to desperation, the chief and his wife together sprang over the cliffs to avoid falling into the hands of their foes.

We wandered all about the beautiful hills, peering over crags and down richly wooded ravines, and from every fresh point obtained exquisite views of the wide calm Pacific Ocean, dotted with many isles. There were ten different inhabited isles in sight, including the two very large ones, and all were bathed in tones of ethereal blue and lilac. As we came back through the forest, we gathered huge pods of a monstrous vine. They were from three to four feet long, and resembled gigantic beans.[1] I have brought them back to convince all gainsayers of the accurate botanical research displayed in the good old story of Jack and the Beanstalk.

[1] The Walai. *Entada scandens.*

I mentioned this fact to a midshipman, to whom I have just presented one of my beans, but I fear he thought I was making game of him!

The evening was so lovely that after supper we strolled down to the beach, and sat beside a great bonfire of cocoa-nut shells, the refuse of *coppra* making. The ruddy glare lighted up the tall palm-trees, mingling with the white light of the full moon; and the little wavelets rippled on the sand, making a pleasant picture. In case you do not know what *coppra* is, I may as well explain that it is the kernel of the cocoa-nut, which is dried in the sun and thus prepared for exportation to the colonies, where it is subjected to such pressure as to extract the oil. It forms one of the largest exports from the isles. The shells and husks burn with so fierce a flame that they destroy any oven or machine in which they are used as fuel; and though the husk would be valuable for making fibre, it is not considered to pay sufficiently well to make it worth while to import a machine. A rough-and-ready contrivance on a small scale has, however, been started here, where a machine for combing out the fibre is turned by the action of two mules, whose lives are spent in continually walking on a tread-mill. I do not mean to imply that the same animals are incessantly at work!

Next morning Mr Mackay, the overseer (who had already done much for our entertainment, having killed the fatted fowl for supper, and shot a beautiful half-tame peacock for our dinner), now put his Mexican saddle on the donkey, and by turning over a flap, so as to bring both the great stirrups on one side, improvised a very good side-saddle, on which we rode by turns. We passed over wide extents of deserted cotton-fields, formerly under careful cultivation, but abandoned owing to falling prices, and the ravages of hurricanes.

One of the most promising experiments now is coffee-planting. We saw coffee shrubs planted under the shade of cocoa-palms and bread-fruit trees, at an altitude not exceeding seventy to a hundred feet. In both these respects the practice here is at variance with all that I have seen in Ceylon; yet this seems to be bearing an excellent crop, and the example is already being followed on several plantations, and seems likely to prove a success.[1]

[1] Great was the dismay and alarm of all the men who have gone into coffee when a most promising estate was recently found to be infested with that most grievous plague, the leaf disease. The estate was taken possession of by Government. All the bushes were burnt, the land strewed with lime, and the place put into strictest quarantine, no man being permitted to set foot on it without a pass. It is hoped that these stringent measures may have proved effectual in stamping out the disease, which otherwise would blast all hope of success in this new undertaking.

At daybreak this morning I got a sketch of the fine old *eevie* grove, and at noon we started on our return, and arrived here in time for five o'clock tea. H.M.S. Wolverine in harbour.

July 1, 1877.

This morning H.M.S. Sapphire sailed for Sydney, taking Captain Olive, who returns to England. He purposes, however, to return here and settle as a planter, and hopes to buy part of Wakaya, the island from which we have just returned.

July 9.

I have had some pleasant expeditions to the reef the last few days, collecting strange beautiful creatures for the children's aquarium, and also for a series of ruder aquariums—buckets and tubs. But it is unsatisfactory work, for our loveliest creatures will die; and especially we find that to introduce the smallest bit of beautiful coral is fatal—at least, before it is wholly bleached in the sun. And you cannot think how tempting it is to arrange miniature coral gardens of pink, blue, lemon colour, and greenish corals of many different forms, and, if only for one day, to watch the many coloured tiny fish playing among it in a great glass globe. But this inevitably results in our finding most of them dead next morning, whereas if we omit the coral the exquisite fish live for many days.

July 14, 1877.

We have for some days been very anxious about Dr Mayo (who, you will remember, came out with us). He has been living chiefly at Khandavu, to enforce the quarantine regulations on vessels calling there. A few days ago he was brought to Levuka suffering very seriously from dysentery, and was carried to the hospital. At first he seemed to improve; but clever doctors are apt to prove bad patients, and the present instance has been no exception. He became rapidly worse, and it has been decided that his only chance of recovery lies in immediate change to the colonies; so he was carried on board the Lyeemoon, which sailed for Sydney to-day.[1] Mr Mitchell also started. He goes to Calcutta to make arrangements about providing coolie labour for Fiji. He hopes to be able

[1] Alas! a very few hours ended the struggle for life. Ere the vessel reached Sydney, one more of the little band, who in the spring of 1875 left England so full of high hope, had passed away, and his body was committed to the deep.

to look after Dr Mayo, but is himself suffering severely from fever. Dr Mayo's English servant came to him from Savu Savu on hearing of his illness, but he made him return at once to take care of his little island, with the unfinished house and the shrubs, which he has imported with so much care.

July 20, 1877.

We have been revelling in the most heavenly weather. But as the thermometer has been down to 67° Fahr., a thing almost unprecedented in the tropics, of course every creature, white and brown, has got cold, cough, influenza, and we are all shivering in our English winter clothes. I have been suffering from my very first experience of Fijian sores, which are the curse of the land. I was on the reef catching the most exquisite tiny fish for the aquarium —pale-blue, dark-blue, bright-green, bands of black and white, but especially gold, with sky-blue collar—when, incautiously slipping my hand under a rock ledge, a horrid great sea-eel, called the *dabea*, which lives in the coral, darted out and tried to swallow my little finger. Happily it failed to bite it off, and I was able to drag back my hand, but it bled very much. I came home at once and soaked it in salt and brandy for fear of poison—a painful but efficacious remedy. I think the finger is going on all right.

The wonder to me is that we do not hear of more frequent accidents, considering the manner in which the unshod natives are for ever walking on the reef, or swimming round ledges haunted by dangerous biting and stinging sea-beasts. The worst accidents I have heard of lately happened on the isles of Lakemba and Cicia.

At the former a girl was diving for clam-shells, and seeing a very large one wide open, she extended her arms intending to encircle it, and so attempt to raise it. But missing her aim, she plunged her hand into it, instead of beneath it. In an instant it closed, and she was held prisoner (you know a clam is a strong dentated bivalve, sometimes of enormous weight). Her companions wondered at her staying below so long, and at last dived in search of her, and found her dead body.

The other sad accident happened at Cicia, where a girl was on the coral-reef catching crabs and other treasures of the sea, and incautiously slipped her hand into a hole in the rock. By no possible means could she succeed in drawing it out again. Her companions were utterly unable to help her, and there the poor girl was kept, while gradually the tide rose and closed over her,

and she too was drowned. Imagine the horror of feeling the tide slowly but steadily creeping up, and awaiting a certain death.

I hope to see this isle of Cicia (pronounced Thithia) next week, as I have just made arrangements for a visit to the Windward Islands, which are the most easterly of the many groups into which the 223 Fijian isles naturally divide themselves. The two chief points of attraction are Loma Loma, which is the capital of the great Tongan chief, Maafu, and the isle of Mago, which is the pattern plantation of Fiji, and is the exclusive property of Mr Ryder and his six sons, who all live on the island, and themselves attend to every detail of their own business, with the happy result, that throughout the most troublous times they have never ceased to flourish. Every one tells me that my ideas of Fiji will be most incomplete till I have seen Mago, and also Nandi, on Viti Levu. So the first omission is now to be rectified, and the second as soon as occasion presents itself. Accordingly next week, when Mr Ryder returns home, I am to accompany him, and see various places of interest on the way.

I am sitting under the shadow of a tall group of plantains. Now the sun has set, and I am writing by moonlight, sitting on the grass, which in such cold weather is scarcely prudent. So good night.

CHAPTER XXVII.

VARIOUS PLANTATIONS — CROTONS — FOREIGN LABOUR — GREEN BEETLES—LOMA LOMA—A TONGAN COLONY—HOT SPRINGS.

On Board the Black Swan,
July 28, 1877.

You see our fortunes are once more looking up.

We have a steamer again!—an old tub recently chartered by Government for this interinsular service. We left Levuka two days ago, and ran across to the island of Koro, which we did not reach till sunset, so dared not risk going inside the reef to collect produce, and merely lay to, while a boat rowed ashore with the letters. By this time there was rather a heavy sea on, and before we reached the green shores of Taviuni it was very rough indeed. Our party included several of the most successful planters of the

group, Mr Ryder, Mr Richardson, and Mr M'Evoy. After breakfast we reached Selia Levu, a large sugar and maize plantation belonging to Messrs Richardson and Elphinston.

Here we landed, and were most hospitably entertained. The invariable blessed hot tea-pot having dissipated a savage headache, born of steamboat, and generally restored life, I was able thoroughly to enjoy a long walk over the estate, through flourishing fields of sugar and maize, and was duly instructed in the mysteries of the sugar-mills. I had already been initiated into these, when on a visit to Mr Elphinston's sister, Mrs Pillans, at Savu Savu. There was a great quantity of produce to be shipped, and for some reason the punt could not be floated, so it all had to come off in small boat-loads, which detained us till 10 P.M. After sunset it rained heavily, which cannot have improved the sugar.[1] Early this morning we passed Vatu Vara, a small lonely island, which is the chosen home of an American, Mr Thompson, and a Tahitian wife. They have adopted several Tongan children, and have only one labour-boy, who goes mad regularly every full moon. Formerly they had three foreign labour-boys, but two of them died of the measles, and have not been replaced. This Robinson Crusoe is said to have considerable capital, so I suppose he really chooses this existence for pleasure!

We next reached Cicia (pronounced Thithia), where Mr M'Evoy has two flourishing properties, eight miles apart. He had a good deal of cargo to ship, but the weather was so rough that it was as much as he could do to unship what he had brought with him.

[1] It may be considered a sure symptom of a reviving faith in the commercial prospects of Fiji, that sundry capitalists in New South Wales are at this moment, 1880, engaged in the erection of large sugar-mills on the Rewa, Raki Raki, and Taviuni, while others are in prospect. That on the Rewa is the property of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. All its appliances are to be of the most perfect description, and it is estimated that its prime cost will be £100,000, that it will give employment to 100 white men, and be capable of turning out 500 tons of sugar per month. So at least we may now hope that the broad acres of sugar-cane will no longer be left rotting in the ground for want of mills; and carriage will be made easy by the use of steam-punts capable of navigating the rivers, and so collecting produce.

It will be strange indeed if the speaking results of collecting native taxes in kind, instead of, as heretofore, in coin, does not give an impetus to cultivators throughout the group. Mr J. B. Thurston, the Colonial Secretary, who from the time of annexation has been the strenuous advocate of this policy, says that when, about four years ago, he distributed his first thirty bushels of maize to be sown in native gardens, he was laughed at, and asked if he ever expected to see a bushel of that maize grown? Last year he answered the question by exporting 30,000 bushels, and sees no reason why the amount should not ere long become 300,000. Already the people have been taught to raise coffee, cotton, and sugar on these district gardens, with the result that where five years ago the revenue derived from native taxes was almost *nil*, it last year amounted to £22,500.

So our time ashore was very much curtailed, which I greatly regret, this being by far the most attractive plantation I have seen. Everything is so beautifully kept — so clean and tidy in every respect, indoors and out. I have seen nothing like it in Fiji. It was pleasant to see how delighted all Mr M'Evoy's men looked when they saw him return; and he had a pleasant word for each, by name. He had several on board with him, who, having been sent back to Levuka as time-expired labour, had re-engaged themselves to him; and his kindness to them during the voyage had already given me a pleasant impression of the relations of master and servant.

The island is very pretty—high grassy hills and deep valleys, richly wooded; a palm-fringed shore, and five Fijian villages. At one end of the isle there are high wooded crags. Mr M'Evoy's own house is at the further side of the isle. That where we landed is the home of Mr Borron, the Scotch overseer. The house, like everything about the place, is a rare model of cosiness, with its books and pictures, and a lovely nosegay on the table.

Equally marked is the care bestowed on every detail out of doors, —the comfortable quarters provided for the foreign labourers—men and women having good quarters quite apart, instead of herding together like pigs, as they are often compelled to do. Moreover, a comfortable hospital—a large clean house—is provided for the sick —one for men and another for women—each divided into several wards, with tidy raised beds, and standing apart in a nice cheery garden. I thought of some of the slovenly discomfort I have seen elsewhere, and marvelled why similar care was not more common. The men and women here, really have a chance of improving by contact with the superior race. We went through the cotton-ginning establishment, where, as a matter of course, everything was in apple-pie order.

This estate is chiefly laid out in cotton; but for once the beautiful has not been wholly forgotten in the lucrative. The same good taste, which is evident in all details, has planted most rare and valuable crotons along the broad paths which intersect the cotton-fields. These and other ornamental shrubs are also carefully cultivated in every available corner. Mr Borron himself brought some beautiful crotons from the New Hebrides, which seem to produce some of the most exquisite varieties of these strange lovely shrubs, which there and in Rotumah attain the size of small trees.

I believe some members of this large and very varied family are to be found in each group of the Pacific,—indeed the large silvery-

leaved tree with fragrant blossoms, which we know in Fiji as the candle-nut tree, forms a prominent feature in the foliage of all the tropical isles I know, including Ceylon. The variety, both of colour and pattern of leaf, exhibited by these plants is truly wonderful. In most cases the leaf is tough and glossy. In some species it is broad and large, in others a mere strip. Sometimes the strip is spiral, and in other cases is divided across the middle so as to form two leaves, connected by a short stem. As concerns colour, the crotons are of every hue that it is possible for foliage to assume. Some are vivid scarlet, some pure crimson, others richest claret colour. Then come all shades of golden-yellow and pale primrose, and every tint of green, from the most delicate to the darkest, as well as greens shaded with chocolate or maroon. In short, their beauty and variety seem to be without limit, and new specimens are constantly brought from the isles near the equator. Mr Thurston, the Colonial Secretary of Fiji, has devoted much care to collecting all the most beautiful kinds, many of which he himself discovered in Rotumah and other far-away isles. His garden at Levuka positively glows with the gorgeous colour of some of these; and from his own most valuable collection he generously sends ample cuttings to friends and botanists in all parts of the world.

Now we are off the isle of Mago (which you must pronounce Mango), and are just going ashore. As seen from the sea, it certainly is very pretty, having a coast of steep cliffs and dense wood. I believe it differs from all other isles in the group, in that the whole centre is one great plain, admirably suited for cultivation, which accordingly is here carried to perfection. We have just passed a small isle devoted to grey rabbits,[1] and another haunted by flying-foxes.

MAGO, *Saturday Evening.*

We landed at Moruna,—a pretty bay, with a pleasant house and garden, which is the home of two of the brothers. Thence a two miles' muddy walk towards the centre of the isle brought us here

[1] The question whether it is desirable to introduce rabbits into the group is one that has caused much discussion. There are a multitude of small isles on which they might be reared with profit; but with the melancholy example of the devastation caused by their introduction into Australia, the danger is one not to be lightly incurred. We hear of large, once flourishing, stations in Victoria, which have been literally abandoned owing to the multitude of rabbits, where the attempt to raise crops has been given up as hopeless. One estate, not far from Melbourne, formerly supported thirty thousand sheep. Now it scarcely yields grass for five goats; and the man left in charge of the deserted house and farm-buildings has to buy meat for himself and fodder for his horse. No wonder that the planters of Fiji do not care to introduce the rabbit here.

to the principal house, where we were welcomed by Mr and Mrs Ryder, their daughter Amy, and three more sons, all cordial and kind. The sixth son, Mr Thomas Ryder, has lately gone to Sydney with his wife and children, and I am most comfortably ensconced in their nice large room. At the present moment, the youngest son, a bright unaffected young fellow, is himself bringing up my luggage in his tiny punt, by some creek which I have as yet failed to discover. Tea has just been announced, and the letters must go back to the steamboat. So good-bye for the present.

Sunday Evening, July 29.

We have had a pleasant idle day, and have just come in from a long walk, which has given me a good general idea of the place. The house itself is bowered with honeysuckle and roses, and the air is scented with orange blossoms from the trees planted near. A hedge of bright scarlet hybiscus separates the garden from the cotton-fields, and its gay blossoms decorate many of the quaint shaggy heads of the foreign labour. Just round the house the land is all under cultivation, but there are many charming pieces of natural wood left untouched; and in every available corner, fruit-bearing trees are planted. Lime-trees in abundance, bread-fruit and shaddock, date-palm and cocoa-nut, patches of banana and *papaw*, and broad fields of maize, yams, *taro*, and sweet potato,—for the multitude which have to be daily fed is very great, and the island depends upon its own produce. Whether the date-palm will bear fruit in this latitude is a question as yet unsolved; but a considerable number of young trees have been raised, and promise well. Coffee also thrives; and even the cotton-fields of Mago flourish as of old. Indeed among all the vicissitudes that have so sorely depressed and temporarily ruined trade in Fiji, this plantation has been uniformly prosperous,—a condition ascribed chiefly to the exceeding care bestowed on it by its large family of owners. [1]

In the course of our walk we passed over a good deal of grassy land, fragrant with lilac orchids, not unlike those of England. Then we wandered up a sheltered valley, planted entirely with fine bread-fruit trees. It is enclosed by high wooded cliffs, and is a delightfully shady retreat from the heat of the noonday sun. Here we

[1] The sea-island cotton from Mago has now earned a world-wide reputation. It has gained the gold medal both at the Paris and Philadelphia International Exhibitions. That Fijian cotton should receive such high honour in America is indeed a triumph.

explored a cave in which the natives used to conceal their dead, and near it was a favourite spot for cannibal feasts in olden days.

This isle of Mago was formerly tributary to Somo Somo, the chiefs and people of which, as I have already told you, were noted throughout Fiji for their exceeding ferocity. When Christianity first began to make progress among the inhabitants of Mago, they were subjected to fierce persecution for their faith, as were also the people of the great isle of Vanua Mbalavu (the Long Land), which we see from here. As usual, however, the converts stood firm, and their numbers rapidly increased, notwithstanding the cruelty of the Somo Somo chiefs.

Now Maafu, the Tongan chief, reigns supreme at Loma Loma, the capital of Vanua Mbalavu (though now, of course, subject to England); and Mago belongs exclusively to the Messrs Ryder, the chiefs having agreed to sell the whole island, and remove the population bodily. Consequently no Fijians now remain here, and the island is worked by about 300 foreign labour—wild-looking men, gathered from all the most uncivilised groups near the Equator—the Tokalau, Marshall, and Gilbert Isles, Solomon Isles, Tanna, New Hebrides, and many another far-away home—the most motley group you can conceive, but many of them intelligent and hard-working. In apportioning their quarters, the different nations seem to keep quite separate, and a certain number have wives and families.

They stop work early on Saturday, and are allowed perfect liberty to spend the afternoon and the whole of Sunday as they please. They have free leave to roam all over the island in search of game, or to take out the canoes and fish on the reef. Of course they do not fail to avail themselves of so good an opportunity of adding to their rations, to say nothing of indulging their natural love of sport. There is an immense number of wild pigs on this isle, the descendants of imported pigs which have run wild in the bush. So a regular hunt is organised every Sunday morning, and to-day the sportsmen returned in triumph, having bagged thirty pigs, and they are now preparing a grand feast.

I have been inquiring as to the truth of stories we have heard of the way in which the men of the New Hebrides catch sharks. I am told it is strictly true—that they actually dive below the shark, and, in so doing, slip a noose round its tail, then rising to the surface, haul it ashore by main force. Certainly these men are almost as much at home in the sea as on land.

MAGO, *August* 3.

We have had several days of incessant rain, and all the lowlands are flooded. At last this morning it cleared just a little, and I determined to secure a sketch of the lovely little inner harbour, which is so curiously enclosed by two encircling arms of wooded cliff, that there is literally only just room for a boat to sail in. Once inside, there she lies safe in the wildest storms, with water four fathoms deep—the snuggest berth you can possibly conceive, and a quiet refuge for a multitude of wild duck, which find safe breeding-ground in the mangroves which fringe the shore, and the roots of which form an oyster-bed. One of the theories concerning this curious island (which is shaped somewhat like a flat dish, with a high rim of coralline rocks enclosing the level arable lands), is, that it was originally an *atoll*—that is, a coral ring enclosing a sea-lake—and that the whole having been upheaved by volcanic action, the waters of the lagoon burst this narrow passage through the encircling rock, and so drained the central plateau. Looking down on the scene from any high point, this theory very naturally suggests itself, and is further supported by the presence of crags of the hardest igneous rock, which appear to have been forced up through the original coral.

As a desirable sketching-ground, I had noted a high point on the wooded crag above the bay, from which I was certain the view must be splendid. The difficulty was to reach it. However, two of my hosts agreed to escort me, and took with them two New Hebrides men, who helped to clear a track, and open up the view, which was most lovely, overlooking not only the blue harbour, with its setting of rich foliage and crag, but the coral reefs beyond it, and the far-away land of Loma Loma. I contrived to perch on a very uncomfortable rock, made up of hard spikes, and secured my drawing, while my companions went beating about the rocks till they started a wild sow with five young ones. The New Hebrides men gave chase; they caught two little pigs alive, and carried them home rejoicing. One of these men has his hair dressed in a series of hard round balls the size of a large orange, which look just as if he had plastered them with pitch; while on the crown of the head the hair stands up in a wild fuzz, in which he wears a long wooden comb.

As we were coming down the hill, we came on a marvellous swarm of metallic blue-and-green beetles, with heads and underside golden,—just the same insect as our ladybirds. I have found these

in all corners of the earth, and in every variety of colour, but nowhere have I seen anything in the slightest degree resembling this swarm. The beetles hung in dense clusters on palm-fronds and stems, on the vines hanging from tree to tree, and on both sides of every leaf, so that not one atom of green could be seen. The palm-trees seemed dressed in coats of mail of shining blue steel; and the vines were like solid ropes of emeralds and sapphires, with golden setting, the gold being the head of the ladybird. There must have been many millions of these living gems, for they covered a space of nearly half an acre in the forest, which truly suggested some wonderful tale of fairyland, with real fairy jewel-trees, where, instead of stupid dead minerals, the gems are all alive, ready to fly away from covetous human touch. They were in such dense masses that the shrubs were quite weighed down by them, and when we shook a bough to make them fly off, it sprang up quite light. They did not seem to be doing any harm. Certainly it was a very pretty glimpse of fairyland. I have brought down a number of the living sapphires, hoping to preserve them, alive or dead.

August 12.

It has gone on raining almost without intermission, and everything is damp and mildewed. The fresh supply of new drawing-paper I got just before starting is one mass of mildew. The clothes hanging up on pegs feel quite clammy: even the handle of my umbrella is covered with green mould. We cannot go one step out of the verandah without picking up pounds of mud on our feet. I am told that for the last three months there has been literally no rain, and loads of fruit of all sorts. Now there is no fruit, but any amount of rain; so I am unlucky. But we are very cosy and happy indoors, and my only regret is not being able to explore the many pretty spots on the isle.

I managed to get back to the gem-mine in the enchanted forest. There I found the fairy jewels as thick as before, still clustered in dense swarms on every leaf and stem. On the same hill I found four kinds of land-snails, two of which are new to me. Two of my hosts are keen naturalists, and have shown me many things of interest—animate and inanimate. All the brethren are as busy as bees from morning till night, personally overseeing the work of their 300 men. No wonder their estate prospers.

August 18.

At last the clouds have relented, and we have had several days of glorious weather. I have been taken to see and to sketch magnificent old Fiji banyan-trees, on cliffs and in the heart of the forest. And one evening there was a muster of the foreign labour for my benefit. We went to their quarters to see them all dance and make merry. Most of them are hideous, and their dances are strange and uncouth—utterly devoid of grace. Certainly, from an æsthetic point of view, these races are as inferior to those of Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa, as the Australian blacks are to the noble Maoris of New Zealand.

Of course the poverty which induced these people to forsake their own homes, and accept a lot of exile and servitude, accounts for their possessing few or no articles of personal adornment; but I noticed one woman from Tanna who had her ears literally covered with tortoise-shell ear-rings—some passed through the others like links, so that she carried fully twenty on each ear. Others had large metal ear-rings, apparently of lead, and of such weight as to drag down the lobe of the ear to a length of several inches. Some women's ears were actually torn in two by this weight, and the flesh hung in strips—a painful sacrifice to fashion.

Many, both men and women, had devoted great care to their hairdressing, which was grotesque in the extreme. My especial friend, whose hair was dressed like balls plastered with pitch, seemed nowise remarkable among his quaint neighbours—some of whom had elaborate twists and plaits and rolls, though others left their wild, unkempt shock-heads as rough as uncombed, unbrushed nature could make them.

For many days past we have been waiting and watching for the chance of some means of getting to Vanua Mbalavu, the long blue island which lies on the horizon; but the weather has been so stormy that we have not seen a sail, and almost despair of doing so. It would be rather a *fiasco* to return to Nasova without having seen Loma Loma; but at present it seems likely to be my fate, as the monthly steamer will call here in a few days on her way from Loma Loma to Levuka.

DALI DONI, VANUA, MBALAVU,
August 21.

This morning was very rainy and blowy. To our amazement, just after breakfast, a gentleman walked in, having come up from

Moruna to say that Mr Hennings had come across from Loma Loma in his little schooner to fetch Miss Ryder and myself. There was no option of delay on account of wind or rain; so we packed at once, and a detachment of foreign labour came up to carry our luggage over the steep muddy hill which lay between us and the anchorage. We found it sufficiently hard work to carry ourselves, so slippery was the ground. The strong gale was in our favour, and the little vessel flew before the wind. Less than two hours carried us from reef to reef, over a distance which often takes many hours, sometimes days. So now we have reached the long island; the little schooner is safely anchored inside the reef, and we are spending a night at this very pretty place—the property of Mr Levick, whose married overseer has given us hospitable welcome.

Loma Loma, *August* 24, 1877.

We left Dali Doni at daybreak, and sailed to Mbalavu, where Mr Hennings has an estate. Here we climbed a steep hill, passing through much luxuriant forest, and some patches of cultivation. From the summit we had a most lovely view of the harbour, which is quite unique, from the multitude of little rocky isles which dot its surface, all densely wooded. But so strongly has the ceaseless wash of the tide marked its level, that it is vain to land on any of these, as the overhanging ledge of rock makes it impossible to ascend at any point. We halted at this beautiful spot long enough to allow me to make a careful drawing of the scene, and then went on to the house of the overseer, where a fine roast turkey awaited us for luncheon. Then down another steep hill, to the beautiful blue sea, of which we caught glimpses, framed by great forest-trees and vines. Here lay the little vessel, with white sails flapping. She had sailed round from the other side of the island, but the wind had fallen, and ere we reached her she was becalmed. So we took the small boat and rowed through a most lovely bay, past richly wooded islands and steep rocky headlands, till we came to the plantation of Mr Vecsey, a Hungarian, married to a handsome Tongan woman, with two pretty, merry children. Here we were most hospitably entertained; but according to custom, the native wife would not sit at table with us, but waited near, and attended to our wants.

In the bright early morning we started to explore the neighbourhood, and when the sun rose high we followed a clear streamlet overshadowed by dark *eevie* trees, and inhabited by thousands of

spiral black shells two inches long, with a very sharp point. I had seen these in collections, but always with the point broken off, and had heard it gravely asserted that this particular shell had always an obtuse end. So it was rather a triumph to find all these, and I carried off a number. On the sunny streamlet floated the fragrant white blossoms of the shaddock, whose boughs, fruit-laden, overhung the water. We gathered branches of the sweet blossoms, and feasted on the huge orange-like fruit—which, however, is of very uncertain excellence, some trees bearing juicy and delicious fruit, while others are very dry, with a flavour of turpentine.

After breakfast (at which we had a capital broth of shell-fish, something like cockles, boiled with rice) we once more embarked with a light breeze, and in the afternoon arrived here. This town, which is spoken of throughout the group as the pattern of order and neatness, is true to its reputation. It is a large, very clean, and tidy village of thatched houses. Slight peculiarities, such as the gable ends being round instead of flat, at once prove them to be the homes of Tongans—*i.e.*, colonists from the Friendly Isles.

We were most kindly welcomed by Mr and Mrs Levick to a home, not only comfortable, but with all the graces of ornamental civilisation. In the evening we wandered along the shore in the moonlight, and turned aside to see the Botanic Garden, which is under the especial care of our host, and where the collection of crotons is particularly good.

At early dawn, tempted by the low rippling of the water on the white sea-beach, just beyond the lawn, we ventured on the rare luxury of a sea-bath, in defiance of the sharks; and, encouraged by their non-appearance, we now repeat this indulgence every morning, while troops of pretty brown children disport themselves around us, swimming and diving like fishes. Our hostess has one charming little girl, whose principal ambition is to walk into the sea up to her neck, whenever she has been dressed with the greatest care!

We devoted our first morning here to rowing along the beautiful shores, and exploring many creeks and inlets, which form secure harbours, walled round by overhanging volcanic rock, and dotted with picturesque islands. All are densely wooded, and tempting to explore, but they are so water-worn that we rowed in and out and all round, one after another, for several hours, before finding one place where we could possibly land. At last we discovered a little sandy bay, where we spread our luncheon in the cool shade of glittering leaves, hoping afterwards to make our way to some high point whence we could look down on the scene. We also wished

to discover some old native fortifications, which we knew to be perched somewhere far above us. But we failed to discover any track; and the dense growth of tropical vegetation was altogether impenetrable, so we rowed quietly back to a pretty island just facing the town, and there lingered till sunset.

On my return I found that the Lady Eleanor, Maafu's wife, had, at his bidding, prepared a *mangete*—that is, a feast—for me, which had been sent to the house during my absence; and my host, unheeding native custom, had, most unfortunately, refused to admit it. I was exceedingly annoyed, knowing how dire an insult this would be considered, but persuaded him to accompany me in the evening to Maafu's house, to call and smooth matters. Properly speaking, notice of our coming should have been sent, and I fear that Lady Eleanor and her ladies were not much pleased at being taken unawares, and *en déshabille*. However, she is a very fine old lady, and we parted excellent friends. Maafu himself had just started for Levuka. He is a splendid man, stalwart and stately; and whenever I have seen him he has always been dressed in native *tappa*, thrown round his waist in handsome heavy folds. He has the proud bearing of his race, for among the Tongans even the common people walk as if they scorn the ground they tread on. Maafu (or the Roko Tui Lau, which is his official title) has ever been noted for the strength of character and vigour of action whereby he secured his position as the great chief of this district.

We heard rather an amusing instance of his shrewdness in dealing with a fanatical sect which most strangely sprang into existence on one of his isles—Matuku. Several men and one woman declared themselves to be angels, and began to hold religious services, and to extract money from their converts, even administering corporal punishment to those who failed to obey their precepts. Their audacity won them many followers, till Maafu arrived in person, and summoned the angels to answer for themselves. The woman brought an angelic baby, whereupon Maafu asked her if it was hers, and if she was married, and if she really thought she was an angel, all which questions she answered in the affirmative. Whereupon he asked her if she couldn't read her Bible, and referred her to St Matthew to prove that angels do not marry, whereas she had not only married, but had a baby! He dismissed her amid the derision of her late disciples, and, having equally turned the men to ridicule (of all things most dreaded by a Fijian), he sentenced them to work on the roads as rogues and vagabonds, and so the new sect collapsed.

Both Maafu and his wife are stanch supporters of the Wesleyan Church, to which we found our way on Sunday morning at 8 A.M. There had already been a service at 6 A.M., which probably accounted for the attendance being somewhat meagre. The building is of the usual Fijian pattern, with thatched roof and matted floor, and many open doorways,—a style of architecture which is always airy and appropriate; but the ends of the church are circular, after the Tongan fashion. The meeting seemed lacking in the perfect simplicity of a Fijian service; and our tendency to laugh was only conquered by our disgust, on seeing a regular verger, armed with a long stick, who periodically rose from his knees and walked about administering a resounding blow to any young woman who was not doubled up, at what he chose to consider the orthodox angle of devotion; while right in front of the pulpit was placed a bench, on which sat a row of the principal men, all dressed in hideous black coats and trousers, and who (doubtless from the same fear of injuring the latter which so strongly affects white men) never pretended to kneel at all; but the verger took care not to see them, and confined his disciplinarian attentions to the women.

We returned in the afternoon to a service for children, which was pretty, the young voices singing very sweetly.

The spread of Christianity in the groups on this side of the Fijian archipelago has been marked by the same quiet and unobtrusive but most steady advance which has been so strangely characteristic of its work throughout these isles. I told you the story of Ono, where the people, having gathered some dim idea of the Unknown God, induced a heathen priest to offer on their behalf (though not on his own) the first words of Christian prayer uttered on the lonely little isle of Ono, which so quickly became a centre of strength to the mission. As in apostolic days, the converts straightway went forth to make known in other isles the new religion of peace and love. One of these Fijian apostles started, like the others, in his little canoe, and sailed a distance of wellnigh 300 miles, till he reached Oneata, an isle lying about twenty miles to the south-east of Lakemba, where the first white missionaries had landed, and where Mr Calvert was then living alone, having only arrived in Fiji about a year previously, as yet knowing little of the people or their language, and yet endeavouring, with the help of the Tongan teachers, to establish stations not only in the thirteen towns on the large isles of Lakemba, but also on the twenty-four isles (some 140 miles apart) which form that group. Few indeed were the labourers in so wide a field.

Gladly was the new teacher from Ono welcomed. Soon one of the chiefs of Oneata was convinced of the truth, and himself undertook to persuade others; and so, one by one, new converts were added to the faith, and others would fain have declared themselves, but dreaded the wrath of the king of Lakemba, to whom Oneata was tributary, and who had strictly forbidden any of his people to adopt the new religion. Great was the amazement of all, when a heathen priest arrived, bearing a message from the king, to say that as so many had become Christians, he wished all the inhabitants of the isle would do so, as it was for the good of the people that all should be of one mind!

These men of Oneata were an industrious and enterprising race, singularly independent in character, and much given to trading with other isles. Now each canoe, as it went forth on its ordinary business, became a little mission ship; and the sailors of Oneata seemed never weary of teaching others all that they had learnt, and urging them to adopt the new religion.

Amongst other isles where they were wont to trade was this isle of Vanua Mbalavu, lying about ninety miles to the north of Oneata. Landing here at Loma Loma, their first convert was a chief of the name of Mbukarau, a rough and powerful man, and strong of purpose. Hearing that there were Tongan teachers at Lakemba, he at once got ready his canoe, and sailed thither, a distance of seventy miles, to ask for a teacher for himself and his people. One was sent; and soon they were joined by a little company of nine persons, and these gradually increased to quite a large congregation, and the new converts in their turn went and taught their neighbours at Yaro. Vanua Mbalavu has a population of about 3000 persons, and is divided into two distinct provinces—Loma Loma and Yaro. A cruel war having broken out between these, the Christians of both districts desired to keep themselves clear of it, and appealed to the king of Yaro for permission to settle on the little isle of Munia, where they might continue neutral. This request was granted, and to the astonishment of all, the king of Yaro sent a message to the inhabitants of Munia, recommending them to *lotu*, and to abandon their fortresses in the mountains, and come down to live peacefully with the Christians, on the sea board. So, strange to say, this purely Christian colony was founded by the advice of a heathen king, and soon a new town was built on the most favourable site; its people were permitted to sail wherever they wished, without hindrance, exempt from the dangers and claims of war; and Munia was accounted a

sacred city of refuge, where any persons, fleeing from either of the fighting districts, were in safety. So they cultivated their lands in peace, but did not fail in their zealous endeavours to spread the good tidings further and further among the outlying isles. Amongst those whom they thus sought to influence were the people of Thikombia, a rocky island, distant about twelve miles, all the inhabitants of which lived in one town on the top of a high crag, the face of which was a sheer precipice, on the brink of which many generations of children had been reared in perfect safety—no one having ever fallen over. These people heard and believed, and thenceforth from that rocky home the voice of Christian worship arose continually. And so from isle to isle the faith continued to spread, notwithstanding waves of bitter persecution which from time to time were raised by those who continued heathen. We have seen those isles of Munia and Thikombia, but have not been very near them.

Within a short distance of Loma Loma lies a group of hot springs, which, though on a very small scale, are of course interesting. Here, as at Savu Savu, some of them lie actually below high-water mark, but the two principal ones are in a deep gorge—a wilderness of almost inaccessible rocks, hidden by huge fallen boulders and interlacing vines. They must have been discovered by the merest accident, and we needed a good guide to show us where they lay. It was a difficult piece of rock-scrambling, but sufficiently interesting to repay the toil.

I think I have already mentioned that we only know of four places now existing in the group where there is evidence of the internal action of fire—namely, the springs at Savu Savu in Viti Levu, a very hot stream on the western side of the same isle, the boiling springs at Ngau, and these at Loma Loma.

We returned by Maafu's excellent road, by far the best as yet constructed in the group. A bevy of nice Fijian girls escorted us, and pointed out, with much wonder, a small boat in which a party of Samoans, weary of the strife in their own land, have ventured to come all the way across the sea. It is a sort of whale-boat, stitched with sinnet—*i.e.*, native string of cocoa-nut fibre. I do not know the exact distance between the two groups, but it cannot be under 1000 miles. So I think the girls might well wonder at the bold islesmen who ventured on such a journey in a little open boat.

I spent part of the next day in a quiet valley, sketching a native cemetery, with the usual dracæna and other red-leaved

plants, and tidy graves, many of which are thickly strewn with small green stones, brought from some distant isle: others are covered over with white wave-worn pebbles or white coral.

On Board the Black Swan,
August 30.

Our departure was rather hurried by the unexpected arrival of the steamer a day before its time. We have retraced the route by which we came, calling at Mago, where Miss Ryder rejoined her family, and at various points in Taviuni, where I had glimpses of several friends, and a pleasant evening at the mission. I have been much edified by hearing the conversation of an Anglo-Fijian of the old type—a man who was not ashamed to entertain his audience with anecdotes of his own kidnapping exploits and those of others, of whom he spoke with much approbation. He referred to the wretched victims as if they had been so many rats. Every such anecdote I hear, makes me wonder less that the actions of such miscreants should have led to reprisals which have resulted in the loss of precious lives, like those of Bishop Patteson and Commodore Goodenough. The speaker went on to boast of other noble deeds by which some of his white friends had lent their elevating influence to the dark races, mentioning one planter especially, Mr L——x, who, finding himself utterly unable to make the rapid fortune he expected by his estate, abandoned it; but ere ridding the country of his presence, he set to work to cut down all the bread-fruit trees (none of *his* planting!), determined that no one else should profit by what he could not enjoy. Could a more diabolical mind be conceived? Certainly if the establishment of a strong-handed government in the country has no other effect than to drive such men as these out of it, it will not have worked in vain. The speaker seemed ready to favour us with many more anecdotes of the past, but my expression of unmitigated disgust unfortunately stayed the stream, which I now regret, as it is as well to know facts, instead of only the vague rumours, which one is apt to suppose exaggerated, like objects seen looming large through a mist.

August 31.

Last night we anchored off Koro, to take in a cargo of arrowroot and other produce. I spent the night with Mrs Chalmers and her daughters, and at six o'clock this morning they brought me on

board. Now we are nearing Ovalau, our island home, which, as usual, is looking lovely. The flag flying at Nasova tells me Sir Arthur is at home. There are a good many vessels in harbour, amongst others a large French man-of-war—the first we have seen since we came here. I see the gig coming from Nasova to fetch me, with the cheery bronze crew, in their white and crimson liveries.

NASOVA, *Sept.* 1.

To-day being the anniversary of annexation, three years ago, is a red-letter day, and public holiday. The races last May were voted such a success, that another race-meeting was held to-day, and a very pretty scene it was, the lovely valley looking its very best. All the officers from the French man-of-war, Le Seignelay, were there, and were greatly amused. Several dined here last night—a pleasant, gentleman-like set. The vessel is at present taking the Roman Catholic Bishop of Samoa, Monseigneur Elloi, on a tour of inspection of all places under his jurisdiction. Both he and Commandant Aube, who is a very fine specimen of the old French school, have been here a good deal, and seem to be very much liked. Their visit is a pleasant episode, as they have seen so much of exceeding interest in the isles they have already visited. Their descriptions of scenery are tantalising.

September 4.

To-day Lady Gordon has had a great luncheon-party of about forty people, and now they are all playing lawn-tennis on the green. As for me, I am preparing for a wonderful and delightful trip. For the last few days our French friends have been urging me to complete "*Le tour de la Mission*" in the Seignelay,—and so, see and sketch many lovely isles, which, under no other circumstances, could I possibly visit. Of course, at first I treated the suggestion as simply a polite form; but we found it was made thoroughly in earnest, *de bon cœur*, and by one and all,—especially by the occupant of the very best cabin, which had actually been prepared for me before I dreamt of accepting it. At last we were all so thoroughly convinced that the invitation was perfectly genuine, that Sir Arthur has consented to my going, and to-morrow we sail for Tonga, and then Samoa, where I am to visit a friend, who is wife of the Consul, and has sent me many invitations. Thence I am to return here.

Such at least is my intention. But my kind new friends scout

the idea of my turning back before we reach Tahiti, of which they speak as of a dream of indescribable loveliness. Whether I may be tempted to proceed there, I cannot possibly tell. Certainly I am made to feel as if I were conferring a favour, instead of what I feel to be accepting so great a one. We sail to-morrow, therefore it may be a good while before you next hear from me. So good-bye for the present.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

NOTES ON FIJIAN FOLK-LORE—LEGEND OF THE RAT AND CUTTLE-FISH: THE CRANE AND THE CRAB: ESSAY OF ROAST PIG: OF GIGANTIC BIRDS—SERPENTS WORSHIPPED AS INCARNATE GODS—SACRED STONES WORSHIPPED—MYTHOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT.

It has been a matter of great regret to me that I found so very few opportunities of hearing the legends and fables which I believe abound throughout these isles. The few persons who have chanced to learn them from the natives were generally too busy to tell them, —still more, unable to spare time to write them down, as I invariably asked them to do. Those I did hear were fanciful, and often poetic.

When I was staying on the island of Ngau, I succeeded in buying some curious specimens of the bait used for cuttle-fish. It is a very fair imitation of a rat, made of the backs of two brown cowries, with a heavy stone between them,—a small brown cowrie to represent the head, and a wooden tail. The shells are bored and tied together with sinnet. Wishing to learn the origin of so quaint a device, we inquired of our host, Zacheusa—a fine old Fijian teacher, who did good work among the Kai Tholos in the early days of the *lotu*, and who knows many legends. What he told us was as follows:—

"A rat one day fell off a canoe into the sea, and landed on the head of a cuttle-fish, greatly to the alarm of both. The cuttle-fish was going to shake off the rat, when the latter prayed him to show mercy on him, and to carry him to a place where his grandfather and grandmother were waiting for him. So the kind cuttle-fish swam on and on, till he was very weary; but the rat enjoyed this new mode of travel, and urged him to go on further and further. At last they neared a grassy bank, which was just where the rat

wished to land; but being an ungenerous animal himself, he feared the cuttle-fish would play him some trick, so he cried, 'Oh, please, do not land me there: I shall surely die.' But the cuttle-fish, being weary of him, swam straight to the bank, whereupon the rat jumped ashore, and instead of thanking his kind deliverer, he ran away jeering. So now the cuttle-fish hates the rat, and is always on the watch to seize him and punish him." And this is why the fisher-folk of Ngau make rats of cowrie-shells to bait their nets.

Here is a kindred fable, quoted from Sir Arthur Gordon's private journal:—

"*In Camp, Nasaucoko, July* 18, 1876. . . .—After yangona in the evening, all the party began to tell fables. 'The crane and the crab,' say the Fijians, 'quarrelled as to their powers of racing. The crab said he would go the fastest, and that the crane might fly across from point to point, while he went round by the shore. The crane flew off, and the crab stayed quietly in his hole, trusting to the multitude of his brethren to deceive the crane. The crane flew to the first point, and seeing a crab-hole, put down his ear, and heard a buzzing noise. "That slave is here before me," said he, and flew on to the next point. Here the same thing happened, till at last, on reaching a point above Serua, the crane fell exhausted, and was drowned in the sea.'

"Ratu Tabusakiu capped this by an almost exactly similar story, —only in this case the competition was between a crane and a butterfly. The latter challenged the crane to fly to Tonga, tempting him to do so by asking if he was fond of shrimps. The butterfly kept resting on the crane's back, without the crane knowing it, and whenever the bird looked round and said to himself, 'That *kaisi* (low born) fellow is gone; I can rest and fly slowly now, without fear of his overtaking me,' the butterfly would leave his back and fly a little way ahead, saying, 'Here I am, cousin,' till the poor bird died exhausted; and the butterfly, who had no longer his back to rest on, perished also."

Equally charming is a legend told to me in the mountains of Viti Levu, which suggests that Charles Lamb must have visited Fiji ere he wrote the 'Essays of Elia,' for here is a native version of the "Essay of Roast Pig"! The legend tells how, many many years ago, there had been a fight at Nandronga, and the dead bodies of the slain were laid under the overhanging eaves of a house till the living had time to bury them. The house accidentally took fire and was burnt down, and the bodies were of course roasted. The chief ordered that they should be removed, and the men who

lifted them burnt their fingers: they instinctively put their hands to their mouths, licked, and liked the flavour. They called to their friends, who followed suit; and thus the people of the isles discovered how excellent a thing is roast flesh,—a fact which they had previously had no chance of testing, as, with the exception of a small rat, no animal of any sort existed on any of the isles, till the men of Tonga imported pigs. Thus it was that cannibalism originated in the isles. So says the legend of Nandronga.

A few legends, forming the subject of popular *mékés*, have happily been preserved by the Rev. Thomas Williams. One of these tells of a crab so large that it grasped a man in its claw, but he fortunately slipped through between the forceps, and so escaped injury. Another man ventured to climb on to the monster's back, and paid dear for his temerity, being dashed to pieces by a stroke from a claw. That must have been a curiously constructed crab! He quotes another which tells of a gigantic bird called "Duck of the Rock," which carried off Tutu Wathi Wathi, the beautiful wife of the god Okova, and sister to Rokoua, while she was fishing on the reef at Nai Thombo Thombo. The gods started in a large canoe to search for the lady, and they came to an island inhabited only by goddesses, who spent their lives in pleasant sport. Rokoua suggested that they might as well remain here, and give up their vain quest for Okova's lost love; but the faithful husband scouted the idea, and insisted on sailing to the Yasawas, the most westerly isles of the group. Here they found the cave in which lived the terrible bird. But the cave was empty, for the bird was fishing; and they found only one little finger of Tutu Wathi Wathi. Yet this Okova cherished as a special relic, and swore to avenge her death. Presently they saw the devourer approach, and his vast wings darkened the face of the sun. In his beak he carried five large turtles, and in his talons ten porpoises, which he at once proceeded to eat. Then Okova prayed to three other gods to aid him by causing the wind to blow; and immediately a gust blew back the feathers of the monster's tail, and Rokoua instantly struck his spear through it vitals. So great was the bird that, though the spear was very long, it was entirely lost in its body. They took one of its smallest feathers to make a new canoe sail, not venturing to risk the use of a large feather. They then cast the dead bird into the sea, causing such a surge as to "flood the foundation of the sky." So having accomplished their just vengeance, they sailed safely back to Nai Thombo Thombo.

It seems strange, in writing of a country so recently pagan, to

have no occasion to allude to the religion of the past. This is partly because the idols were few and insignificant. The different gods dwelt enshrined in all manner of animals—fish, birds, reptiles, —and even plants. The hawk, the shark, the land-crab, fowl, eel, and, above all, the serpent, were thus held in reverence.

Of the latter, very few specimens are to be found in Fiji (so few, that during my two years of continual travel and observation in the isles, I have only seen two, both of which were gliding among rocks on the sea-shore). These reptiles were worshipped under different names in the various isles of the group. In some places, when one was found it was anointed with cocoa-nut oil, and left at liberty. In others it was reverently carried to the temple, and there laid on a bed of native cloth and solemnly anointed and fed.

Under this form was worshipped Ndengei, the supreme god and creator of all things. He it was who sent a great deluge to punish the sin of his rebellious people; he also revealed fire by teaching two of his human sons to rub two pieces of wood together. His temple was at Raki Raki, a cave on the north-east of Viti Levu, whither the people carried great offerings. One sacrifice is recorded of two hundred pigs and one hundred turtles. But the most acceptable sacrifices were human; and men have been known to slay their own wives, rather than fail to propitiate the giver of yams. The offerings were laid before the mouth of the cave, and the priests crawled in on hands and knees. If the prayer were granted, they reappeared all wet to show that needful rain-showers would fall. Of course if the omen failed, subsequent sins were alleged as the cause of failure in the compact.

Ndengei was supposed to love silence, therefore the noisy bats near his cave were banished; the potters were likewise dismissed to small islands, purposely created for them; and women going to fetch water from the sacred mount were enjoined to be silent, else their food would turn into serpents.

There appears reason to suppose that the serpent was commonly worshipped throughout the Pacific—certainly in the Friendly or Tongan Isles. When (A.D. 1830) Mr Williams visited this group, he touched at a small isle near Tongatabu, and found a nest of sea-snakes. He bade his men kill the largest as a specimen. At the next island where they touched they carried it ashore, and prepared to dry it, but the fishermen (who were preparing their nets) raised a terrific yell, and seizing their clubs rushed upon the Christian natives, shouting, "You have killed our god!" Williams stepped between the two parties, and with difficulty restrained their vio-

lence, on condition that the reptile should at once be carried back to the boat.

The Fijian gods seemed to have fully appreciated the blessings of quiet. Raitumaibulu, lord of life, god of the crops, was especially careful of his own comfort in this respect. During the month of December (midsummer), when he came to earth to cause all fruit-bearing trees to blossom, the people were forbidden to make any unnecessary noise: they might not blow the trumpet, nor beat drums, nor dance, nor sing (not even at sea); they might neither cultivate the soil nor make war, lest the god should be disturbed in his operations, and deliver over the land to famine. Here we mark the connection, common to all mythologies, between the old serpent and the fruits of the earth. This Ceres of Fiji had no serpent car to bring him to earth, but he himself took the form of a serpent, and dwelt in a small cave near Mbau, where the people flocked to do him homage.

A legend attaches to this cave, which makes us wish that more attention could be given to the folk-lore of these isles ere it utterly fades away, like the grey mists of night before the beams of morning. Perhaps it is already too late, for the *lotu* (Christianity) has brought in such a flood of newer stories, that doubtless the old fables have fallen into disrepute, and probably (just as in Scotland) the dread of a sneer or a rebuke from their teachers will cause those who know them best to shrink from uttering them. The legend I allude to was happily recorded by Mr Waterhouse, senior, one of the earliest and most able of the Wesleyan missionaries. Such men as these had little spare time, and probably less inclination, to take much trouble in collecting foolish stories. However, enough have been recorded to make us wish for more; and here is a sample of Fijian folk-lore.

I have told you how the lord of the crops lay enshrined in the likeness of a great serpent. But there was a sceptical chief, named Keroika, who would not believe in this divinity, and rashly determined to test the matter. So, taking with him a cargo of small fish, he proceeded in his canoe to the sacred cave. There he was greeted by a serpent of average size, who told him he was son of the god: Keroika made him an offering of fish, and prayed for an interview with his father. Another serpent came out to see what was going on. He proved to be a grandson, and he likewise received a gift of fish, and a request to induce his grandfather to appear. And after a while an immense serpent came forth, and Keroika knew that it was the Raitumaibulu himself. So he made

obeisance, and presented his offering of fish, which was graciously accepted by the serpent-god; but as he turned to retreat to his cave Keroika treacherously shot him with an arrow, and then, horror-stricken at what he had done, fled in terror from the spot, but he was pursued by a terrible voice, crying, "Nought but serpents! Nought but serpents!" These ominous words were still ringing in his ears when he reached his home, where, determined to conquer his foolish fear, he called for dinner. But when the servants uncovered the cooking-pot, and were about to lift out the food, they started back in horror—the pot was full of serpents. At least, thought the chief, I will drink; but as he raised a jar to his lips he poured out serpents instead of water. Hungry and thirsty, he threw himself wearily on his mat, hoping to find solace in sleep, but from every corner hissing snakes glided round him, and the wretched man fled from his house in terror. As he passed the temple he saw a crowd collected to hear the priest make a revelation, which was that the god had been wounded by a citizen, and that in consequence evil would surely befall the city. So, finding there was no use in further concealment, he confessed his crime, made large offerings to propitiate the angry god, and received pardon.

When the Rev. John Hunt visited the island of Vatulele, he was invited by one of the chiefs to visit a cave about seven miles distant, in which dwelt the gods of the island. He found a cave about twenty feet in height and sixty in length, communicating with an inner cave, in both of which the receding tide leaves a clear pool, inhabited by a variety of crustacea somewhat larger than a shrimp: these are common enough at certain places, and are brown till cooked, when they become red. Those in this cave are all red, and probably are therefore deemed supernatural. Their mother is said to be of immense size, and dwells by herself in the inner cave; but the children, who are called Ura, answer to their name, and appear at the call of their worshippers—or rather did so in heathen days.

Although an idol visibly representing a deity was almost unknown, the personal appearance of the gods was minutely recorded. Thus Thangawalu was a giant sixty feet in height, with a forehead eight span high. Another had but one tooth, which was in the lower jaw, but rose above his head. He had wings instead of arms, and on these were claws wherewith to hook his victims. One had eight arms, and was a skilful mechanic. Another had eight eyes, and was full of wisdom. One had eighty stomachs. Another had

two bodies, male and female, united like the Siamese twins. There was a leper god, and a murderer; a god of war, and one whose sole delight was to steal women of high birth.

The carpenters, the fishermen, and agriculturists, each worshipped special deities.

In addition to the principal gods, there was a vast number of little gods, answering to our fairies, who were called "children of the waters." There were also numerous objects of veneration which recall our own Scotch relics. Such was *wairua*, which was an oval stone, the size of a swan's egg, which, with several smaller stones, children of the god, lay in the hollow of a small tree beside the stream at Namusi in Viti Levu. There was another stone at Mbau which gave birth to a little stone whenever a woman of rank was confined in the town. This sympathetic deity has been removed, but its children still mark the spot where it formerly lay. At Ovalau there was formerly a black stone, which was once a sacred pig killed and baked by sacrilegious hands, but which, on being taken out of the oven, was found to have assumed this form. There were also groves of sacred trees at Mbau, and in several other places—too many of which have been destroyed by iconoclastic zeal.

Certain war-clubs were treated with reverence approaching to worship; and the men who had wielded them with the mightiest arm, and had been specially distinguished in battle, ranked as heroes and demi-gods, henceforth to be honoured with libations at every ceremonial-drinking of yangona. As the water was poured into the yangona-bowl, a herald cried aloud: "Prepare a libation to the Loa-loa—to the Veidoti," &c., &c., mentioning all the chief temples reverenced by the tribe. "Prepare a libation to the chieftains who have died on the water, or died on the land! Be gracious, ye lords, the gods, that the rain may cease" (or whatever prayer was to be offered). Then, as the cup was filled for the highest chief present, the herald once more cried: "Let the gods be gracious, and send us a wind from the west or from the east," according to the requirements of the day. Then as the king or high chief took the cup, he poured the libation on the ground ere he drank. Of course this ceremony has passed away with the old faith in the gods.

As to notions concerning a future life, I fancy that the traditions concerning the way of approach to the spirit-world varied in different parts of the group. In Vanua Levu we were told that the beautiful headland of Nai Thombo Thombo, the northernmost point of

the isle, was the spot where the gods were wont to assemble, and whence the spirits of the dead departed to seek the abode of Ndengei. It is a very eerie spot, with precipitous cliffs towering above dense masses of foliage, and casting a deep gloomy shade—the awful stillness of which is unbroken by the cry of any living thing.

The way to Mbula, as the Fijian Paradise is called, was long and difficult, and many enemies sought to waylay the spirits and take them captive. One of these, called Nangga Nangga, was so bitter a foe to all who had eschewed wedded bliss, that it is said not one of these hapless ones has ever reached his bourne. Seized by the vengeful demon, he was dashed to pieces on a large black stone.

At Nai Thombo Thombo the fortunate man, whose wives had so loved him as to submit to be strangled on his death, was rejoined by their spirits, and together they embarked in the canoe which was appointed to carry them to the presence of the judge—notice of their approach being given by a parrot, which cried once for each spirit of the party, and so gave warning to a demon named Samu-yalo, "the killer of souls," who lay in wait and endeavoured to club them. If he succeeded in killing them, he feasted spiritually; but if he only wounded them, they were doomed to wander sadly among the mountains.

Those who escaped the club of the soul destroyer passed on to one of the highest peaks of the Kauvandra mountains, where the path to Mbula ends abruptly at the brink of a precipice, the base of which is washed by a deep lake. Here an old man and his son induced the wayfarers to sit on an overhanging oar, whence they were thrown headlong into the deep waters below, through which they passed to Muri Muria, which was a minor paradise in Mbula.

The true abode of bliss was Mburotu, a blessed region of scented groves and pleasant glades, where all things most highly prized by the Fijians were said to abound. Here they cultivated pleasant gardens, lived in families, ate and drank, and even fought. Moreover, like Mohammedan saints, they were supposed to attain exceeding great stature. But the primary idea connected with death seems to have been that of simple rest, as expressed in one of their songs—

"A mate na vawa rawa;
Me bula—na ka ni cava?
A mate na cegu."

Death is easy;
Of what use is life?
To die is rest.

Those spirits who had failed to please the gods were subjected to divers punishments. Some were laid in rows on their faces, and converted into *taro* beds. Men who had failed to slay a foe were sentenced for evermore to beat a heap of filth with a club, this being the most degrading punishment. Others were roasted and eaten by hungry gods.

Opinions were divided as to the souls of inanimate objects. Some people professed to have seen the souls of canoes, houses, plants, pots, and other things swimming on the stream of the Kauvandra well, which bore them to the regions of immortality; and others averred that they had seen footmarks of the ghosts of pigs and dogs round the same well.

Mburotu (which the Tongans called Bulotu and the Samoans Pulotu) was the abode of the gods, into which favoured mortals were admitted. The legends concerning it tell of a speaking tree which was there, and a fountain of life. The Tongan legend tells how Maui, the chief of the gods, fished up Tonga from the bottom of the sea, and how some of the minor gods fled from Bulotu and took up their abode on Tonga. To punish this rebellion they were made subject to death, and forbidden ever to re-enter Bulotu; and great was their wonder and sorrow when they realised the change that had come over them. But they made the best of matters, and became the parents of the noble Tongan race.

The Fijians believe that sometimes, as they sail from the Windward Isles towards Khandavu, they see Burotu, with the sun shining brightly on it. But when they steer towards it, it fades away, and grows fainter and fainter, till it vanishes utterly, and they sail in silent wonder over the spot where they distinctly saw it standing, green and beautiful, in the midst of the waters.

In the course of our wanderings through the isles, we have heard some curious statistics concerning the practice of witchcraft, which in many details are almost identical with the superstitions which, as you well know, were once so common in the British Isles, and still linger there in many a corner little suspected.[1] Thus a person

[1] Our police records have quite recently reported cases in which waxen images have been moulded to represent persons against whom some miscreant had a grudge. So late as 1870 a man at Beauly in Scotland was proved to have made an image of clay, which he buried near the house of a farmer to whom he owed a grudge, fully believing that, as the rain washed away the clay, so his enemy would pine and die. And in the same district a woman was found sticking lumps of mud on the trees with the same object. In 1872, two onions, stuck full of pins, and ticketed with the name of the intended victim, were found hidden in a chimney corner in Somerset. And as regards other forms of witchcraft, I have just heard (Aug. 1880) from a large landowner in Skye, that he has had a letter from his

having a grudge against his neighbour will try to obtain something which he has touched—a bit of his dress, the refuse of his food, or, above all, a piece of his hair,—and having uttered certain charmed words, will conceal this about the house—generally in the thatch—with a conviction that, ere long, the victim will waste away. Should he bathe in running water before the fourth day, the charm is broken, as it also would be should the charm be discovered. Of course, persons professing Christianity are supposed to lose faith in such matters; but in truth such superstitions are slow to die out. There are also certain magical leaves which, being carefully rolled up in a bamboo and buried in a man's garden, insure his being bewitched. In heathen days, the help of the priest was sought in laying on the charm; and a common method pursued was to bury a cocoa-nut beneath the temple hearth, where a fire was constantly burning: then, as the nut dried up and perished, so would the person represented sicken and die. Here, as in Scotland, there were professional witches, whose power for evil was always to be purchased. Persons believing themselves to be in danger from any such, invariably applied to some dealer in witchcraft, who wrought counter spells. Should the wizard be detected in his evil deed—burying or hiding the charm—he was summarily clubbed, and his house burnt.

Strange ordeals were also common, as proofs of guilt or innocence. So were divers methods of divination.

Very curious, too, are the various forms of *tambu* or prohibition, made use of to protect the gardens from robbery—such as planting a cluster of reeds, the tops of which are all inserted in one cocoa-nut. The rash thief who defies this *tambu* is certain to be afflicted with boils.

Seers used formerly to be in high repute, and the class of visions that we know as "second sight" were common.

Among the graceful forms of superstition, is that of courteously

tenants, signed by several influential members of the Free Church, complaining of a family—a mother and five daughters—who, by evil arts, take away the milk from their cows. Of this elaborate proofs are given. The case was mentioned to another man of the same district, who was asked what he thought of it. He answered—"He couldn't say. His own cow had recently been thus charmed; but he knew another *skeely* woman, and sent for her. She came and made a turn round the cow, and twined red worsted in its tail, and the milk came back. For this he paid her five shillings, but she told him that her charm would only work for three months, and if after that the cow ought still to be giving milk, she must be sent for again!"

For many curious statistics on these subjects, see 'From the Hebrides to the Himalayas,' by C. F. Gordon Cumming.

exclaiming *mbula* ("life to you") to a person who sneezes, who invariably replies *mole*—"thanks."

From these few meagre notes you may gather that there is abundant interesting material to be collected in these isles, should any one be found possessing unbounded leisure, perfect knowledge of the people and of their language, and a disposition to devote both to the search for these fast-fading traces of the past.

APPENDIX.

GOVERNMENT AND THE FIJIANS.

Among the many difficult problems which awaited solution when Sir Arthur Gordon assumed the task of government, none seemed more hopeless than that of devising a system of native taxation which should be at once just and remunerative. The atrocious wrongs connected with the poll-tax, devised by Thakombau's government, had led to its abolition in favour of a labour-tax, the working of which, however, was found to be impracticable. It was therefore necessary to devise some system which should be more acceptable to the people, and more satisfactory in its results. After mature consideration, Sir Arthur decided to adopt the course so strongly recommended by Mr Thurston—namely, to cause every district to make a garden or plantation, the produce of which should be sold to the highest bidder. From the money thus received the Government should claim the sum at which the district had been assessed, and the surplus should be restored to the cultivators. The promulgation of this scheme led to a storm of the most virulent abuse. It was said that Government was about to absorb the whole trade of the isles; that the measure was cruelly antagonistic to every interest of the white planters; that it was certain to prove a gigantic failure; and, in short, it was about as unpopular a measure as was ever devised.

Sir Arthur is, however, one who has been well described as "doing his own thinking for himself." Unheeding the storm of tongues, he caused the chiefs to establish gardens in every district, and though, at first, from many causes beyond control, they seemed

in danger of utter failure, which should fulfil the prophecies of the unfriendly, after a while they prospered to such a degree as to astonish even the keenest advocates of the scheme, and became not only a large source of revenue, but also produced a surplus which has greatly enriched the several districts.

The matter is one of such importance to the colony that a few further particulars may prove interesting.

The following extracts from the 'Fiji Times' reveal something of the manner in which the poll-tax was collected, and the labour market supplied, immediately prior to annexation—*i.e.*, in 1874.

"The native poll-tax, and the manner of enforcing it, is creating considerable dissatisfaction on all sides. Only last week, it appears, a whole town was summoned for arrears of taxes. Nineteen men and twenty women were sentenced, in default of payment, to hard labour—the former for 35 weeks, and the latter to 19 weeks; subsequently they were hired to planters at 1s. per week, until the amount of the tax, together with 5s. for summons, and 10s. for serving it in each case (although only one summons was issued), be fully paid. This is collecting taxes with a vengeance, and such proceedings are eminently calculated to engender ill-feeling on the side of the natives, and to create disturbances in retaliation for such extraordinary treatment. It is no wonder that Her Britannic Majesty's Consul and the Commodore were everywhere met by natives, imploring to be relieved from the severe rule of the *de facto* Government, and beseeching those high officers to annex the islands to Great Britain.

"We know that but a few weeks back one minor chief proposed, and was with difficulty prevented from, the commission of suicide, simply because he and his people were deprived of liberty under these most atrocious regulations."

"*To the Editor of the 'Fiji Times.'*

"Levuka, *September* 19, 1874.

"Sir,—At the risk of being troublesome, I have again to draw attention to the manner in which this Government are oppressing the unfortunate Ra Coast natives. From two labour boats which arrived here this morning from that district, I gather the following reliable information. My informant states labourers are obtained as follows:—

"'Any men and women whose taxes are in arrear are summoned to appear before the warden, to answer to the same. The usual

method pursued is to send a general summons, embracing perhaps all the adult population of a large town, and 1s. mileage is charged individually for service of summons—a summons which in many cases has never been served. These unfortunate natives are compelled to attend the court, and, in the absence of any advocate, are mulct in the sum of 5 or 1 dol., as the case may be (male or female), together with the costs of court, including the mileage, which amounts to about 4 dollars per man: of course they cannot pay, and are then sentenced to work out the amount, at the rate of 1s. per week, and are compelled to engage with planters for one year. Then what follows? Husbands and wives are dragged away from their homes, their little surroundings become lost and destroyed. They have to endure a bitter and compulsory bondage of twelve months, with the prospect of returning to their cold and desolate hearths—with fresh taxes in view, *ad infinitum.*'"

Another correspondent writes—

"I am informed that the wretched natives who are unable to pay their taxes are made to work on plantations at the rate of forty days for 4s., sixty days for 6s. At this rate, the unfortunate wretches would have to work for 280 days in the year to pay the yearly tax imposed upon a man and his wife."

And yet another—

"The vile atrocious wrongs which have been perpetrated in connection with the labour traffic and the collection of taxes upon the helpless, frightened natives—of both sexes—by a cowardly set of officials, assisted by a brutal, licentious soldiery, and connived at by the executive, because the money—blood money, with God's curse surely stamped upon every coin—flows into the treasury, are a foul blot, even upon the worst Government with which this unhappy country has been afflicted; and yet, sir, we are met on all sides with the canting cry, 'Oh! what a good thing for these poor natives to be taken away to the cotton plantations. You must civilise them first, and then Christianise them.'"

In Sir Arthur Gordon's report on this subject, he says:

"The tax imposed on natives by Cakobau's government was a uniform poll tax of £1 per man and 4s. per woman throughout the group. I, however, find it difficult, and indeed impossible, to suppose that revenue was the object contemplated in the imposition of

this tax, or that its payment was ever seriously looked for. If any such expectations existed, they were doomed to disappointment. The largest sum ever obtained in any one year from a population of, at one time, certainly not less than 150,000, was £6000, and of this sum a large part, as I will presently explain, was not, in fact, received from natives as payment of their tax, or indeed from natives at all.

"I believe that the main design of the native poll-tax, when first imposed, and as it existed on the arrival of the British Commissioners in Fiji in 1874, was that of furnishing through its instrumentality a large supply of labour to the plantations of the white settlers. And in this respect it no doubt worked successfully. The unknown consequences of disobedience to the 'Matanitu' (the equivalent of the Indian 'Sircar') exercised a mysterious terror over the minds of the natives, which induced them in many cases, in consideration of the advance of their taxes on the part of a planter, to contract with him for a year or more of gratuitous service. These, however, were of course the exceptions. In the majority of cases, the tax was simply not paid, and could not be paid. When this happened the legal penalty for default was six months' imprisonment, which was spent in labour on the plantation of any settler who would pay to the Government the amount of the defaulter's tax. But though six months was the limit allowed by law for such assignment, the magistrates of that day were not very scrupulous in their reading of the Act, and sentences of a year, and even eighteen months, seem to have been pronounced; while by the imposition of heavy costs, and the assumption that the default of their payment might be similarly punished by 'imprisonment on a plantation,' even these periods were almost indefinitely extended.

"Sir H. Robinson felt strongly the impossibility of maintaining such a system, which he rightly described as one by which the services of the entire male population of whole districts had been in effect sold to European planters in other and distant islands. He at once abolished it, and substituted an arrangement by which all but adult males were excused from taxation, and the tax of these men fixed at twenty days' labour in the year, redeemable by money payments of various amounts, according to the supposed wealth, or poverty, of the district in which they lived.

"This, therefore, was the problem which I had presented to me: Should I continue the labour-tax of 1874; should I re-enact and attempt to enforce the direct tax in money of the old Fijian Gov-

ernment; or should I endeavour to provide some substitute for the existing system which should bring larger returns to the treasury, and yet be neither oppressive nor opposed to the traditionary habits and feelings of the people?

"The labour-tax in its existing form was clearly unsustainable. It is impossible to transport the whole population for twenty days to those places where public works are being carried on. Such places are few, and in most districts of the colony there are really no public works on which the inhabitants can be employed. In such cases either works have to be invented which are not needed, and which lead to an employment—(or rather a waste)—of labour in no way beneficial to the colony, as well as an expense of supervision wholly thrown away, or the tax must be quietly permitted to fall into disuse.

"The practical alternative, therefore, was the renewal of the poll-tax of the old Fijian Government, or the substitution of some as yet untried system.

"If the idea of re-enacting a poll-tax be abandoned, no other direct money-tax could be imposed. In fact, there is a species of absurdity in the imposition of pecuniary taxation on a population, nine-tenths of which possess no money. I know it has been said that if they do not possess money, they, at least, might all become possessed of it by engaging to work for planters. I confess I am unable to see the force of this assumption. The ordinary wages given by a planter to an able-bodied man were, in 1875, 1s. a week, or £2, 12s. per annum. This is a small sum from which to pay a tax ranging from £1 downwards, even if the wages be paid in money, and not, as was invariably the case, in 'trade,' of often questionable value. Whether it is to the native's advantage to leave his *taro* patch and yam plantations, his own village, his generally comfortable home, and his family, to work on some distant estate for 52s. a-year, may be questioned; nor do I think he can reasonably be expected to do so, except under strong compulsion."

Sir Arthur proceeds to give some of the reasons which led to his deciding on the "district garden" scheme. With regard to its practical working, he adds—

"The receipts from the native taxes, which in 1875, under the old system of collection, amounted to but £3499, 2s. 5d., reached in 1876 (during only a part of which year the new scheme was in operation) the sum of £9342, 16s. 3d., in 1877 that of

£15,149, 14s. 8d., and in 1878 amounted to nearly £19,000. The exact figures for this last year have not yet reached me.

"The expenses incurred in 1877 in collecting and shipping the produce to Levuka, and in payment of the eighteen persons engaged in these duties, amounted to £1341, 11s. 9d. A further expenditure was also incurred for the purchase and gratuitous distribution of seed, tools, bags, &c., amounting to £386, 5s. 10d. I have not yet received the accounts for 1878, but if the expenses be assumed as equal to those of 1877, there will be a clear profit to the Treasury on this tax of over £17,000, while the expenses of collection will not have reached £2000.

"Let us turn, however, to the more important question of the social influence of the new law.

"To answer this question, the nature and working of its machinery must be first described.

"The amount of the tax to be paid by each province, estimated in pounds sterling, is annually assessed by the Legislative Council, the assessment being based, as regards each province, on mixed considerations of the amount of the population, the nature and productiveness of the soil, and the degree of civilisation which the province has attained.

"There are twelve such provinces, not including the two highland districts of Viti Levu.

"Tenders are called for, for the purchase of the articles of produce in which the tax may be paid.

"These articles have hitherto been: *coppra*, cotton, candle-nuts, tobacco, and maize; to these, coffee, which the natives have now begun to grow largely, will soon be added. *Bêche de mer* has also been accepted from some places.

"The highest tender is accepted in the case of each article, and to the successful tenderer all the produce delivered or collected in discharge of the tax is transferred on its receipt by Government.

"The amount of the assessment fixed, and the prices offered for various articles of produce by the successful tenderer or tenderers, are intimated to the Roko Tui or native governor of each province.

"The apportionment of the shares to be borne by each district in the province, and the selection of the article or articles of produce to be contributed, are then made, nominally and according to law, by a Board appointed under the Ordinance, but practically by the *Bose vaka Yasana*, or Provincial Council, which, as I have previously explained, consists of chiefs of districts, styled '*Bulis*,'

under the presidency of the Roko Tui, frequently, though not always, aided by the presence of the Governor's Commissioner.

"The next stage is the apportionment of the tax of each district by the *Bose ni Tikina*, or District Council, consisting of the town chief of the district, under the presidency of the *Buli*. By this body the share of each several township in the district is determined.

"Lastly, the individual share of produce to be contributed or work done by each family in each village is settled by the town chief, aided by the elders of the township.

"The mode in which the articles are raised is left to the people themselves to determine, and the methods adopted have been very various. In some places each village has grown its own tax produce along with what it grew for sale or domestic use; in others, several villages have combined to grow their produce in one large plantation. These latter are what, by those who wish to discredit the scheme, are called 'Government gardens,' but, in fact, no such gardens exist. The soil and the produce both belong to the people themselves.

"This machinery recognises the primitive community system, on which all political and social institutions in Fiji are based, and which, even in the matter of taxation, I found to be still in use as regarded the rates for local purposes, such as payment of schoolmasters and village police, which, quite irrespectively of the Government (and, as some would say, illegally), were imposed by the Provincial Councils in a species of voluntary assessment.

"This species of taxation is, consequently, familiar to the natives, and thoroughly understood by them,—a fact which causes the pressure of the impost to be more lightly felt than it would be if demanded directly from the individual by the Government. It, moreover, renders the natives themselves, to a very large extent, active and responsible agents in the collection of revenue.

"Both of these are, I need hardly say, points of very considerable importance.

"But these were not the only results which the system was aimed to effect, nor are they the only objects which have been attained by its adoption.

"As was anticipated by the framers of the Ordinance, the cultivation of articles of export by the natives has been largely promoted.

"Fijians are by no means habitually indolent, as by many careless observers they are supposed to be; and they are passionately

fond of agriculture: but their cultivation, though very neat and careful, is chiefly that of food plantations and articles for domestic use.

"Sugar, tobacco, and the paper mulberry are, and have long been, almost universally grown in addition to root crops and plantains; but they are not, as a rule, grown with a view to exportation; although cocoa-nuts have been manufactured into *coppra*, and yams in large quantities have long been sold, or rather bartered, by the natives, to the white traders.

"Under the new system, the area of native cultivation is rapidly increasing, and the lesson which it was desired to inculcate has been already more than partially learnt.

"Another consequence of the adoption of this law has been that of giving to the people a juster idea of the value of the produce which they raise.

"When a money-tax was insisted on, it was necessary that at certain fixed periods every man should make a payment in cash to the tax collector.

"Very few natives (except perhaps in the province of Lau) hoard or possess coin. Their wealth consists in the accumulation of masses of property, not in money; and as the day on which the coin had to be produced came round, an unscrupulous itinerant trader (and such traders are not always remarkable for a high tone of commercial morality) could obtain almost anything, and almost any amount of anything in the possession or under the control of natives, in exchange for the coveted and indispensable piece of coin necessary to pay the tax. That coin the trader sold as an article of barter on his own terms, and those terms were usually hard ones.

"Even at the best of times, when this pressure did not exist, the native only received about half the price which the very same traders, with the knowledge they still will obtain a handsome profit by their purchase, are now ready to give to the Government for a similar amount of produce.

"This has opened the eyes of the natives, and in their private trading transactions they now in many cases ask and obtain prices more nearly resembling the true market value of the article; while for the surplus produce raised by them of those articles in which the tax is paid, beyond what is required to meet it, the Government practically obtains for them a price equal to that which it receives itself from the contractor for the tax produce; and that too paid in cash, and not (as had previously been the case) in goods which the trader valued at his own discretion. As I have before observed, the details of last year's operations have not yet reached

me, but I know that several hundred pounds were in this manner gained by one locality alone in 1877.

"Since this paragraph was written—indeed this very morning—I have received letters from Fiji which inform me that the amount of tax produce sent in during 1878 in payment of taxes, in excess of the amount required to meet the demands of the assessment, and which has been sold for the benefit of those contributing to it, has realised between £1500 and £2000.

"It may seem strange when thus speaking of apparently large transactions between the natives and white traders, that there should have been any difficulty on the part of the former in finding money to pay a money-tax; but in point of fact hardly any money was received by them. Objectionable as it seems to be thought by some to receive produce instead of money *from* the natives, these same parties see no objection to forcing *on* the natives as payment for their produce imported goods estimated at a wholly fictitious value.

"A native, we will suppose, makes and wishes to dispose of *coppra*, which he offers to the white trader who 'works' that district. Say he has got half a ton. This, according to present prices paid to the Government, would be worth £6, 10s.

"The trader probably offers about £3 (until, perhaps, very lately, it certainly would not have been more, and probably less), and this he pays in cloth, knives, &c., of which he estimates the value at perhaps double the proper amount; so that he obtains £6, 10s. worth of produce from the native for goods worth £1, 10s.

"The native was often aware he was imposed on; but until the new system of taxation was introduced he had no alternative but to take what was offered, or leave his produce unsold.

"He can now sell at the prices which have been publicly tendered.

"The system of making an unduly large profit is so regularly recognised, that, in most of the shops in Levuka itself, there was in 1875 a 'native price' on articles, which was usually *double* the amount which would be asked of a European. There is still, I am informed, a 'native price;' but whether the disproportion between it and that asked of white customers is as great as formerly, I am not aware.

"The action of the Government affords a most valuable protection to the native producer, by insuring him a market where he will receive cash for his produce at a fair rate; and, paradoxical as it may seem, it is, nevertheless, strictly true that the reception by the Government of produce in payment of taxes has been an im-

portant step towards the introduction of cash transactions in the dealings between the traders and the natives. . . .

"It does not require half an eye to perceive that the people have thriven under the new system. . Everywhere the increased areas of cultivation, the enlarged towns, the good new houses, the well-kept roads, the cheerful and healthy-looking population, present the strongest possible contrast to the aspect of the country in 1875. This was fully admitted to me, not long before I left Fiji, by a leading planter, who said that nobody who had eyes in his head could deny that the natives were very much better off than they were three years ago; but he added (and there was much significance in the admission), that this was by no means an advantage to the planter, whose difficulties in obtaining labour were thereby materially increased.

"Not three years have since passed by, and already we see that it has secured an ample revenue, that it has stimulated the industry, and has doubled the produce, of the colony; that under it the population are more prosperous than they have been for a long time, and are, notwithstanding the incessant efforts of mischief-makers, content and trustful, as they will, I firmly believe, continue to be.

"I am especially desirous that it should not be forgotten that this is but one in a series of measures which should be regarded together as a whole, and which have for their objects the preservation and social development of the native race.

"A. H. G."

THE END.

FIJI ARCHIPELAGO

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